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THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER

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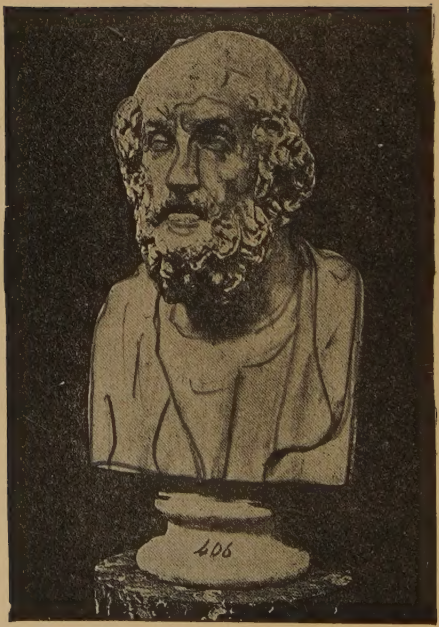

HOMER.

THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER

DONE INTO ENGLISH PROSE

BY

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AS ONE THAT FOR A WEARY SPACE HAS LAIN
LULLED BY THE SONG OF CIRCE AND HER WINE
IN GARDENS NEAR THE PALE OF PROSERPINE,
WHERE THAT ÆGÆAN ISLE FORGETS THE MAIN,
AND ONLY THE LOW LUTES OF LOVE COMPLAIN,
AND ONLY SHADOWS OF WAN LOVERS PINE,
AS SUCH AN ONE WERE GLAD TO KNOW THE BRINE
SALT ON HIS LIPS, AND THE LARGE AIR AGAIN,
SO GLADLY, FROM THE SONGS OF MODERN SPEECH
MEN TURN, AND SEE THE STARS, AND FEEL THE FREE
SHRILL WIND BEYOND THE CLOSE OF HEAVY FLOWERS
AND THROUGH THE MUSIC OF THE LANGUID HOURS,
THEY HEAR LIKE OCEAN ON A WESTERN BEACH
THE SURGE AND THUNDER OF THE ODYSSEY.

A. L.

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INTRODUCTION

The translation of the *Iliad* by Mr. Lang, Mr. Leaf, and Mr. Myers, first published in 1882, and that of the *Odyssey,* by Professor Butcher and Mr. Lang, issued three years earlier, have been generally accepted as the best versions of these great masterpieces yet made in English prose. This high reputation is due partly to their scholarly accuracy and faithfulness to the original, but perhaps more particularly to the literary skill of the translators. Their prose is simple but dignified; it has a touch of the archaic that reminds us of the *Bible* and Shakespeare and gives us the sense of reading an ancient classic; and it has a smoothness, and grace, and rhythm that almost produce the effect of verse. In reissuing both volumes in this inexpensive form and in a series designed chiefly for the use of students in secondary schools, the intention is to encourage and facilitate the reading of these noble classics of antiquity by boys and girls. At present the knowledge of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* is confined too closely to the few who are able to read them in the original tongue. But, like the *Bible,* both these poems are so simple—so primitive indeed—in thought and expression that they are capable of adequate translation into the modern languages

without loss of any great part of their power and beauty. It is to be hoped, therefore, that the publication in this form of these admirable versions will help to make a close acquaintance with the two noblest poems of antiquity possible for multitudes of young people who are ignorant of the ancient tongue in which they were written but who are not one whit less susceptible to their charm.

In adapting the translation of the *Odyssey* to the purposes of this series, it has been necessary to reduce it in bulk by about one fifth, an operation rendered easy by the primitive character of the original poem. What I have struck out consists of some of the repetitions so plentifully used in Homer and other similar matter unessential to the narrative, particularly passages that the young reader would find especially difficult. In a few instances, for the sake of clearness, I have replaced the allusive name of a god or hero by the simple name. No other changes have been made in the text of the translation, except in several cases where it was necessary to insert a few words to make the connection clearer.

Such notes of the translators as would be useful to young readers have been preserved, and I have added, in brackets, a few others that seemed to be required for the special public to which this volume is adapted. Other explanation the *Odyssey* scarcely needs. The plot and its characters reveal themselves fully as the

tale progresses, and allusions that are not quite clear at first soon become intelligible.

Nor did it seem wise to cumber these pages with discussion about the authorship and origin of the Homeric poems, points as to which little is definitely known. It is sufficient to say that they date from about the eighth century before Christ, that they seem to be based on the legends of an even earlier age, and they are associated by tradition with the name of Homer. Like the more ancient portions of the Hebrew Scriptures, they are precious memorials of primitive ages, of the early stages of civilization. In them we often find the plain records of cruelty and greed, of superstition and ignorance, but we see also the upspringing of the essential virtues: reverence for the unseen powers, charity and mutual helpfulness, love of honour and truth and manliness. Achilles and Odysseus, the most ancient heroes in the world's literature, have become for mankind two of the most typical: the one the ideal of manly valour; the other the ideal of manly wisdom and shrewdness. And the immortal tales that were woven about their names have never lost their charm for later generations. for they too are typical: the one of the passionate rivalry of war; the other of the steadfast love of country and family that draws the wanderer home through many perils.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY G. R. CARPENTER

HOMER AS A UNIVERSAL POET

From *Homer and the Study of Greek*

Homer is a poet for all ages, all races, and all moods. To the Greeks the epics were not only the best of romances, the richest of poetry; not only their oldest documents about their own history,--they were also their *Bible,* their treasury of religious traditions and moral teaching. With the *Bible* and Shakespeare, the Homeric poems are the best training for life. There is no good quality that they lack; manliness, courage, reverence for old age and for the hospitable hearth; justice, piety, pity, a brave attitude toward life and death, are all conspicuous in Homer. He has to write of battles; and he delights in the joy of battle and in all the movement of war. Yet he delights not less, but more, in peace; and prosperous cities, hearths secure, in the tender beauty of children, in the love of wedded wives, in the frank nobility of maidens, in the beauty of earth and sky and sea, and seaward murmuring river, in sun and snow, frost and mist and rain, in the whispered talk of boy and girl beneath oak and pine tree.

Living in an age where every man was a warrior, where every city might know the worst of sack and fire, where the noblest ladies might be led away for

slaves, to light the fire and make the bed of a foreign master, Homer inevitably regards life as a battle. To each man on earth comes "the wicked day of destiny," as Malory unconsciously translates it, and each man must face it as hardily as he may.

Homer encourages them by all the maxims of chivalry and honour. His heart is with the brave of either side—with Glaucus and Sarpedon of Lycia no less than with Achilles and Patroclus. "Ah, friend," cries Sarpedon, "if once escaped from this battle we were for ever to be ageless and immortal, neither would I myself fight now in the foremost ranks, nor would I urge thee into the wars that give renown; but now—for assuredly ten thousand fates of death on every side beset us, and these may no man shun, nor none avoid—forward now let us go, whether we are to give glory or to win it!" And forth they go, to give and take renown and death, all the shields and helms of Lycia shining behind them, through the dust of battle, the singing of the arrows, the hurtling of spears, the rain of stones from the Locrian slings. And shields are smitten, and chariot horses run wild with no man to drive them, and Sarpedon drags down a portion of the Achæan battlement, and Aias leaps into the trench with his deadly spear, and the whole battle shifts and shines beneath the sun. Yet he who sings of the war, and sees it with his sightless eyes, sees also the Trojan

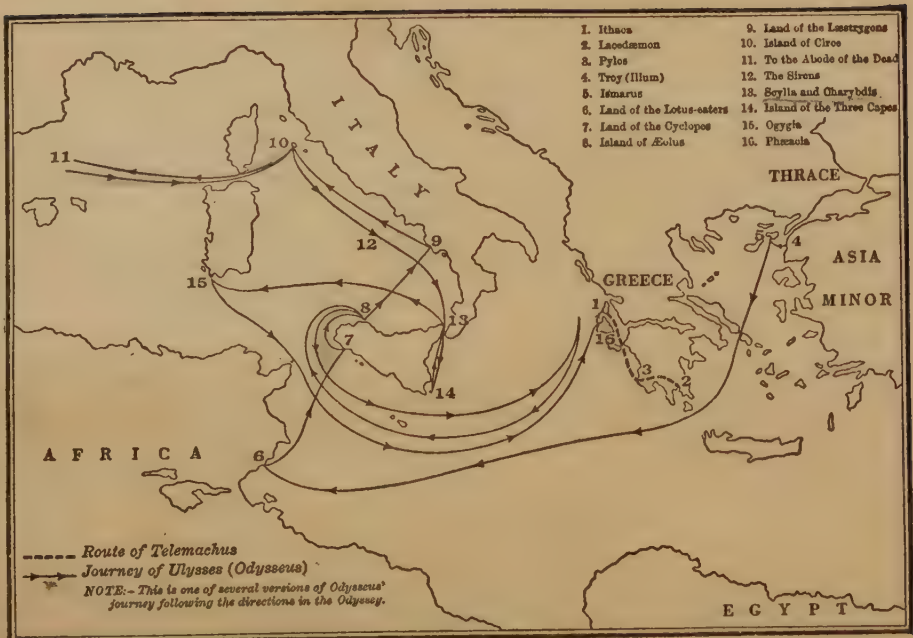
women working at the loom, cheating their anxious hearts with broidery of gold and scarlet, or raising the song to Athene, or heating the bath for Hector, who never again may pass within the gates of Troy. He sees the poor weaving woman, weighing the wool, that she may not defraud her employers, and yet may win bread for her children. He sees the children, the golden head of Astyanax, his shrinking from the splendour of the hero's helm. He sees the child Odysseus, going with his father through the orchard, and choosing out some apple trees "for his very own." It is in the mouth of the ruthless Achilles, the fatal, the swift-footed hero with the hands of death, that Homer places the tenderest of his similes. "Wherefore weepest thou, Patroclus, like a fond little maid, that runs by her mother's side, praying her mother to take her up, snatching at her gown, and hindering her as she walks, and tearfully looking at her till her mother takes her up?—like her, Patroclus, dost thou softly weep."

Such are the moods of Homer, so full of love, of life, and all things living, so rich in all human sympathies, so readily moved when the great hound Argus welcomes his master, whom none knew after twenty years, but the hound knew him, and died in that welcome. With all this love of the real, which makes him dwell so fondly on every detail of armour, of implement, of art; on the divers-colored gold-work of the shield, on

the making of tires for chariot-wheels, on the forging of iron, on the rose-tinted ivory of the Sidonians, on cooking and eating and sacrificing, on pet dogs, on wasps and their ways, on fishing, on the boar hunt, on scenes in baths where fair maidens lave water over the heroes, on undiscovered isles with good harbours and rich land, on ploughing, mowing, and sowing, on the furniture of houses, on golden vases wherein the white dust of the dead is laid,—with all this delight in the real, Homer is the most romantic of poets. He walks with the surest foot in the darkling realm of dread Persephone, beneath the poplars on the solemn last beach of Ocean. He has heard the Siren's music, and the song of Circe, chanting as she walks to and fro, casting the golden shuttle through the loom of gold. He enters the cave of the Man Eater; he knows the unsunned land of the Cimmerians: in the summer of the North he has looked, from the fiord of the Læstrygons, on the Midnight Sun. He has dwelt on the floating isle of Æolus, with its walls of bronze unbroken, and has sailed on those Phæacian barks that need no help of helm or oar, that fear no stress, either of wind or tide, that come and go and return obedient to a thought and silent as a dream. He has seen the four maidens of Circe, daughters of wells and woods, and of sacred streams. He is the second-sighted man, and beholds the shroud that wraps the living who are

doomed, and the mystic dripping from the walls of blood yet unshed. He has walked in the garden closes of Phæacia, and looked on the face of gods who fare thither, and watched the weaving of the dance. He has eaten the honey-sweet fruit of the lotus, and from the hand of Helen he brings us that Egyptian nepenthe which puts all sorrow out of mind. His real world is as real as that in *Henry V;* his enchanted isles are charmed with the magic of *The Tempest*. His young wooers are as insolent as Claudio, as flushed with youth; his beggar-men are brethren of Edie Ochiltree; his Nausicaä is sister to Rosalind, with a different charm of stately purity in love. His enchantresses hold us yet with their sorceries; his Helen is very Beauty; she has all the sweetness of ideal womanhood, and her repentance is without remorse. His Achilles is youth itself, glorious, cruel, pitiful, splendid, and sad, ardent, and loving, and conscious of its doom. Homer, in truth, is to be matched only with Shakespeare, and of Shakespeare he has not the occasional wilfulness, freakishness, and modish obscurity. He is a poet all of gold, universal as humanity, simple as childhood, musical now as the flow of his own rivers, now as the heavy plunging wave of his own Ocean.

ANDREW LANG


1. Ithaca
2. Lacedæmon
3. Pylos
4. Troy (Ilium)
5. Ismarus
6. Land of the Lotus-eaters
7. Land of the Cyclopes
8. Island of Æolus
9. Land of the Læstrygons
10. Island of Circe
11. To the Abode of the Dead
12. The Sirens
13. Scylla and Charybdis
14. Island of the Three Capes
15. Ogygia
16. Phæacia
ITALY
THRACE
ASIA
MINOR
GREECE
AFRICA
EGYPT
Route of Telemachus
Journey of Ulysses (Odysseus)
NOTE:- This is one of several versions of Odysseus' journey following the directions in the Odyssey.

THE ODYSSEY

BOOK I

In a Council of the Gods, Poseidon absent, Pallas procureth an order for the restitution of Odysseus; and appearing to his son Telemachus, in human shape, adviseth him to complain of the Wooers before the Council of the people, and then go to Pylos and Sparta to inquire about his father.

TELL me, Muse, of that man, so ready at need, who wandered far and wide, after he had sacked the sacred citadel of Troy. Many were the men whose towns he saw and whose mind he learnt, yea, and many the woes he suffered in his heart upon the deep, striving to win his own life and the return of his company. Even so he saved not his company, though he desired it sore.

Now all the rest of the princes who had fought at Troy were at home, and had escaped both war and sea, but Odysseus only, craving for his wife and for his homeward path, the nymph Calypso held in her hollow caves, longing to have him for her lord. All the gods had pity on him save Poseidon, who raged continually against godlike Odysseus. But when Poseidon had departed for the distant Ethiopians, the other gods were gathered in the halls of Zeus. Then among them the

father of gods and men began to speak, for he bethought him in his heart of noble Ægisthus, whom the son of Agamemnon, far-famed Orestes, slew. Thinking upon him he spake out among the Immortals:

"Lo you now, how vainly mortal men do blame the gods. For of us they say comes evil, whereas they even of themselves, through the blindness of their own hearts, have sorrows beyond that which is ordained. Thus of late Ægisthus, beyond that which was ordained, took to him the wedded wife of Agamemnon and killed her lord on his return, and that with sheer doom before his eyes, since we had warned him by the embassy of Hermes the keen-sighted, that he should neither kill the man nor woo his wife."

And the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, answered him, saying: "O father, throned in the highest, that man assuredly lies in a death that is his due; so perish likewise all who work such deeds! But my heart is rent for wise Odysseus, the hapless one, who far from his friends this long while suffereth affliction in a seagirt isle, where is the navel of the sea, a woodland isle, and therein a goddess hath her habitation, the daughter of the wizard Atlas, who knows the depths of every sea, and himself upholds the tall pillars which keep earth and sky asunder. His daughter it is that holds the hapless man in sorrow: and ever with soft and guileful tales she is wooing him to forgetfulness of Ithaca.

But Odysseus, yearning to see if it were but the smoke leap upwards from his own land, hath a desire to die. As for thee, thine heart regardeth it not at all! What! did not Odysseus by the ships of the Argives make thee free offering of sacrifice in the wide Trojan land? Wherefore wast thou then so wroth with him, O Zeus?"

And Zeus the cloud-gatherer answered her, and said: "My child, what word hath escaped the door of thy lips? Yea, how should I forget divine Odysseus, who in understanding is beyond mortals and beyond all men hath done sacrifice to the deathless gods, who keep the wide heaven? Nay, but it is Poseidon, the girdler of the earth, that hath been wroth continually with quenchless anger for the Cyclops' sake whom he blinded of his eye, even godlike Polyphemus whose power is mightiest amongst all the Cyclôpes.[1] From that day forth Poseidon the earth-shaker doth not indeed slay Odysseus, but driveth him wandering from his own country. But come, let us here one and all take good counsel as touching his returning, that he may be got home; so shall Poseidon let go his displeasure, for he will in no wise be able to strive alone against all, in despite of all the deathless gods."

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, answered him, and said: "O father, throned in the highest, if indeed

[1] [The adventure is related in Book IX.]

this thing is now well pleasing to the blessed gods, that wise Odysseus should return to his own home, let us then speed Hermes the Messenger, to the island of Ogygia. There with all speed let him declare to the lady of the braided tresses our unerring counsel, even the return of the patient Odysseus, that so he may come to his home. But as for me I will go to Ithaca that I may rouse his son yet the more, planting might in his heart, to call an assembly of the long-haired Achæans and speak out to all the wooers who slaughter continually the sheep of his thronging flocks, and his kine with trailing feet and shambling gait. And I will guide him to Sparta and to sandy Pylos to seek tidings of his dear father's return, if peradventure he may hear thereof and that so he may be had in good report among men."

She spake and bound beneath her feet her lovely golden sandals, that wax not old, and bare her alike over the wet sea and over the limitless land, swift as the breath of the wind. And she seized her doughty spear, shod with sharp bronze, weighty and huge and strong, wherewith she quells the ranks of heroes with whomsoever she is wroth. Then from the heights of Olympus she came glancing down, and she stood in the land of Ithaca, at the entry of the gate of Odysseus, on the threshold of the courtyard, holding in her hand the spear of bronze, in the semblance of a stranger,

Mentes the captain of Taphians. And there she found the lordly wooers: now they were taking their pleasure at draughts in front of the doors, sitting on hides of oxen, which themselves had slain. And of the henchmen and the ready squires, some were mixing for them wine and water in bowls, and some again were washing the tables with porous sponges and were setting them forth, and others were carving flesh in plenty.

And godlike Telemachus was far the first to descry her, for he was sitting with a heavy heart among the wooers dreaming on his good father, if haply he might come somewhence, and make a scattering of the wooers there throughout the palace, and himself get honour and bear rule among his own possessions. Thinking thereupon, as he sat among the wooers, he saw Athene —and he went straight to the outer porch, for he thought it blame in his heart that a stranger should stand long at the gates: and halting nigh her he clasped her right hand and took from her the spear of bronze, and uttered his voice and spake unto her winged words:

"Hail, stranger, with us thou shalt be kindly entreated, and thereafter, when thou hast tasted meat, thou shalt tell us that whereof thou hast need."

Therewith he led the way, and Pallas Athene followed. And when they were now within the lofty house, he set her spear that he bore against a tall pillar, within the polished spearstand, where stood many

spears besides, even those of Odysseus of the hardy heart; and he led the goddess and seated her on a goodly carven chair, and spread a linen cloth thereunder, and beneath was a footstool for the feet. For himself he placed an inlaid seat hard by, apart from the company of the wooers, lest the stranger should be disquieted by the noise and should have a loathing for the meal, being come among overweening men, and also that he might ask him about his father that was gone from his home.

Then a handmaid bare water for the washing of hands in a goodly golden ewer, and poured it forth over a silver basin to wash withal, and drew to their side a polished table. And a grave dame bare wheaten bread and set it by them, and laid on the board many dainties, giving freely of such things as she had by her. And a carver lifted and placed by them platters of divers kinds of flesh, and nigh them he set golden bowls, and a henchman walked to and fro pouring out to them the wine.

Then in came the lordly wooers; and they sat them down in rows on chairs and on high seats, and henchmen poured water on their hands, and maidservants piled wheaten bread by them in baskets, and pages crowned the bowls with drink; and they stretched forth their hands upon the good cheer spread before them. Now when the wooers had put from them the

desire of meat and drink, they minded them of other things, even of the song and dance: for these are the crown of the feast. And a henchman placed a beauteous lyre in the hands of Phemius, who was minstrel to the wooers despite his will. Yea and as he touched the lyre he lifted up his voice in sweet song.

But Telemachus spake unto grey-eyed Athene, holding his head close to her that those others might not hear: "Dear stranger, wilt thou of a truth be wroth at the word that I shall say? Yonder men verily care for such things as these, the lyre and song, lightly, as they that devour the livelihood of another without atonement, of that man whose white bones, it may be, lie wasting in the rain upon the mainland, or the billow rolls them in the brine. Were but these men to see him returned to Ithaca, they all would pray rather for greater speed of foot than for gain of gold and raiment. But now he hath perished, even so, an evil doom, and for us is no comfort, no, not though any of earthly men should say that he will come again. Gone is the day of his returning! But come declare me this, and tell me all plainly: Who art thou of the sons of men, and whence? Where is thy city, where are they that begat thee? Say, on what manner of ship didst thou come, and how did sailors bring thee to Ithaca, and who did they avow themselves to be, for in no wise do I deem that thou camest hither by land. And

herein tell me true, that I may know for a surety whether thou art a newcomer, or whether thou art a guest of the house, seeing that many were the strangers that came to our home, for that *he* too had voyaged much among men."

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, answered him: "Yea now, I will plainly tell thee all. I avow me to be Mentes, son of wise Anchialus, and I bear rule among the Taphians, lovers of the oar. And now am I come to shore, as thou seest, with ship and crew, sailing over the wine-dark sea, unto men of strange speech, even to Temesa,[1] in quest of copper, and my cargo is shining iron. And there my ship is lying toward the upland, away from the city, in the harbour of Rheithron beneath wooded Neion: and we declare ourselves to be friends one of the other, and of houses friendly, from of old. Nay, if thou wouldest be assured, go ask the old man, the hero Laertes, who they say no more comes to the city, but far away toward the upland suffers affliction, with an ancient woman for his handmaid, who sets by him meat and drink, whensoever weariness takes hold of his limbs, as he creeps along the knoll of his vineyard plot. And now am I come; for verily they said that *he*, thy father, was among his people; but lo, the gods withhold him from his way. For goodly Odysseus hath not yet perished

[1] [Tamasia, in the mountainous centre of Cyprus.]

on the earth; but still, methinks, he lives and is kept on the wide deep in a seagirt isle, and hard men constrain him, wild folk that hold him, it may be, sore against his will. But now of a truth will I utter my word of prophecy, as the Immortals bring it into my heart and as I deem it will be accomplished, though no soothsayer am I, nor skilled in the signs of birds. Henceforth indeed for no long while shall he be far from his own dear country, not though bonds of iron bind him; he will advise him of a way to return, for he is a man of many devices. But come, declare me this, and tell me all plainly, whether indeed, so tall as thou art, thou art sprung from the loins of Odysseus. Thy head surely and thy beauteous eyes are wondrous like to his, since full many a time have we held converse together ere he embarked for Troy, whither the others, aye the bravest of the Argives, went in hollow ships. From that day forth neither have I seen Odysseus, nor he me."

Then wise Telemachus answered her, and said: "Yea, sir, now will I plainly tell thee all. My mother verily saith that I am his; for myself I know not, for never man yet knew of himself his own descent. O that I had been the son of some blessed man, whom old age overtook among his own possessions!"

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake unto him, and said: "Surely no nameless lineage have the

gods ordained for thee in days to come, since Penelope bore thee so goodly a man. But come, declare me this, and tell it all plainly. What feast, nay, what rout is this? What hast thou to do therewith? Is it a clan drinking, or a wedding feast, for here we have no banquet where each man brings his share? In such wise, flown with insolence, do they seem to me to revel wantonly through the house: and well might any man be wroth to see so many deeds of shame."

Then wise Telemachus answered her, and said: "Sir, forasmuch as thou questionest me of these things and inquirest thereof, our house was once like to have been rich and honourable, while yet that man was among his people. But now the gods willed it otherwise, in evil purpose, who have made him pass utterly out of sight as no man ever before. Truly I would not even for his death make so great sorrow, had he fallen among his fellows in the land of the Trojans. Then would the whole Achæan host have builded him a barrow,[1] and even for his son would he have won great glory in the after days. But now the spirits of the storm have swept him away inglorious. He is gone, lost to sight and hearsay, but for me hath he left anguish and lamentation; nor henceforth is it for him alone that I mourn and weep, since the gods have wrought for me other sore distress. For all the

[1] [Burial Mound.]

noblest that are princes in the isles, in Dulichium and Same and wooded Zacynthus, and as many as lord it in rocky Ithaca, all these woo my mother and waste my house. But as for her she neither refuseth the hated bridal, nor hath the heart to make an end: so they devour and minish my house, and ere long will they make havoc likewise of myself."

Then in heavy displeasure spake unto him Pallas Athene: "God help thee! thou art surely sore in need of Odysseus that is afar, to stretch forth his hands upon the shameless wooers. If he could but come now and stand at the entering in of the gate, with helmet and shield and lances twain, as mighty a man as when first I marked him in our house drinking and making merry what time he came up out of Ephyra from Ilus son of Mermerus! For even thither had Odysseus gone on his swift ship to seek a deadly drug, that he might have wherewithal to smear his bronze-shod arrows: but Ilus would in no wise give it him, for he had in awe the everliving gods. But my father gave it him, for he bare him wondrous love. O that Odysseus might in such strength consort with the wooers: so should they all have swift fate and bitter wedlock! Howbeit these things surely lie on the knees of the gods, whether he shall return or not, and take vengeance in his halls. But I charge thee to take counsel how thou mayest thrust forth the wooers from

the hall. Come now, mark and take heed unto my words. On the morrow call the Achæan lords to the assembly, and declare thy saying to all, and take the gods to witness. As for the wooers bid them scatter them each one to his own, and for thy mother, if her heart is moved to marriage, let her go back to the hall of that mighty man her father, and her kinsfolk will furnish a wedding feast, and array the gifts of wooing exceeding many, all that should go back with a daughter dearly beloved. And to thyself I will give a word of wise counsel, if perchance thou wilt hearken. Fit out a ship, the best thou hast, with twenty oarsmen, and go to inquire concerning thy father that is long afar, if perchance any man shall tell thee aught, or if thou mayest hear the voice from Zeus, which chiefly brings tidings to men. Get thee first to Pylos and inquire of goodly Nestor, and from thence to Sparta to Menelaus of the fair hair, for he came home the last of the mail-coated Achæans. If thou shalt hear news of the life and the returning of thy father, then verily thou mayest endure the wasting for yet a year. But if thou shalt hear he is dead and gone, return then to thine own dear country and pile his mound, and over it pay (burial) rites, full many as is due, and give thy mother to a husband. But when thou hast done this and made an end, thereafter take counsel in thy mind and heart, how thou mayest slay the wooers in thy

halls, whether by guile or openly; for thou shouldest not carry childish thoughts, being no longer of years thereto. Hast thou not heard what renown the goodly Orestes gat him among all men in that he slew the slayer of his father, guileful Ægisthus? And thou, too, my friend, for I see that thou art very comely and tall, be valiant, that even men unborn may praise thee. But I will now go down to the swift ship and to my men, who methinks chafe much at tarrying for me; and do thou thyself take heed and give ear unto my words."

Then wise Telemachus answered her, saying: "Sir, verily thou speakest these things out of a friendly heart, as a father to his son, and never will I forget them. But now I pray thee abide here, though eager to be gone, to the end that after thou hast bathed and had all thy heart's desire, thou mayest wend to the ship joyful in spirit, with a costly gift and very goodly, to be an heirloom of my giving, such as dear friends give to friends."

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, answered him: "Hold me now no longer, that am eager for the way. But whatsoever gift thine heart shall bid thee give me, when I am on my way back let it be mine to carry home: bear from thy stores a gift right goodly, and it shall bring thee the worth thereof in return."

So spake she and departed, the grey-eyed Athene, and like an eagle of the sea she flew away, but in his spirit

she planted might and courage, and put him in mind of his father yet more than heretofore. And he marked the thing and was amazed, for he deemed that it was a god; and anon he went among the wooers, a god-like man.

Now the renowned minstrel was singing to the wooers, and they sat listening in silence; and his song was of the pitiful return of the Achæans, that Pallas Athene laid on them as they came forth from Troy. And from her upper chamber the daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, caught the glorious strain, and she went down the high stairs from her chamber, not alone, for two of her handmaids bare her company. Now when the fair lady had come unto the wooers, she stood by the door-post of the well-builded roof holding up her glistening tire before her face; and a faithful maiden stood on either side her. Then she fell a-weeping, and spake unto the divine minstrel:

"Phemius, since thou knowest many other charms for mortals, deeds of men and gods, which bards rehearse, some one of these do thou sing as thou sittest by them, and let them drink their wine in silence; but cease from this pitiful strain, that ever wastes my heart within my breast, since to me above all women hath come a sorrow comfortless. So dear a head do I long for in constant memory, namely, that man whose fame is noised abroad from Hellas to mid Argos."

Then wise Telemachus answered her, and said: "O my mother, why then dost thou grudge the sweet minstrel to gladden us as his spirit moves him? It is not minstrels who are in fault, but Zeus, methinks, is in fault, who gives to men, that live by bread, to each one as he will. As for him it is no blame if he sings the ill-faring of the Danaäns; for men always prize that song the most which rings newest in their ears. But let thy heart and mind endure to listen, for not Odysseus only lost in Troy the day of his returning, but many another likewise perished. Howbeit go to thy chamber and mind thine own housewiferies, the loom and distaff, and bid thy handmaids ply their tasks. But speech shall be for men, for all, but for me in chief; for mine is the lordship in the house."

Then in a maze she went back to her chamber, for she laid up the wise saying of her son in her heart. She ascended to her upper chamber with the women her handmaids and then was bewailing Odysseus, her dear lord, till grey-eyed Athene cast sweet sleep upon her eyelids.

Now the wooers clamoured throughout the shadowy halls. And wise Telemachus first spake among them:

"Wooers of my mother, men despiteful out of measure, let us feast now and make merry and let there be no brawling; for, lo, it is a good thing to list to a minstrel such as him, like to the gods in voice. But

in the morning let us all go to the assembly and sit us down, that I may declare my saying outright, to wit that ye leave these halls: and busy yourselves with other feasts, eating your own substance, going in turn from house to house. But if ye deem this a likelier and a better thing, that one man's goods should perish without atonement, then waste ye as ye will; and I will call upon the everlasting gods, if haply Zeus may grant that acts of recompense be made: so should ye hereafter perish within the halls without atonement."

So spake he, and all that heard him bit their lips and marvelled at Telemachus, in that he spake boldly.

Then Antinoüs, son of Eupeithes, answered him: "Telemachus, in very truth the gods themselves instruct thee to be proud of speech and boldly to harangue. Never may Cronion[1] make thee king in seagirt Ithaca, which thing is of inheritance thy right!"

Then wise Telemachus answered him, and said: "Antinoüs, wilt thou indeed be wroth at the word that I shall say? Yea, at the hand of Zeus would I be fain to take even this thing upon me. Howsoever, there are many other kings of the Achæans in seagirt Ithaca, kings young and old; someone of them shall surely have this kingship since goodly Odysseus is dead. But as for me, I will be lord of our own house and thralls, that goodly Odysseus gat me with his spear."

[1] [The son of Cronos, Zeus.]

Then Eurymachus, son of Polybus, answered him, saying: "Telemachus, on the knees of the gods it surely lies, what man is to be king over the Achæans in seagirt Ithaca. But mayest thou keep thine own possessions and be lord in thine own house! Never may that man come who shall wrest from thee thy substance violently in thine own despite, while Ithaca yet stands. But I would ask thee, friend, concerning the stranger—whence he is, and of what land he avows him to be? Where are his kin and his native fields? Doth he bear some tidings of thy father on his road, or cometh he thus to speed some matter of his own? In such wise did he start up, and lo, he was gone, nor tarried he that we should know him;—and yet he seemed no mean man to look upon."

Then wise Telemachus answered him, and said: "Eurymachus, surely the day of my father's returning hath gone by. Therefore no more do I put faith in tidings, whencesoever they may come, neither have I regard unto any divination, whereof my mother may inquire at the lips of a diviner, when she hath bidden him to the hall. But as for that man, he is a friend of my house from Taphos, and he avows him to be Mentes, son of wise Anchialus, and he hath lordship among the Taphians, lovers of the oar."

So spake Telemachus, but in his heart he knew the deathless goddess. Now the wooers turned them

to the dance and the delightsome song, and made merry, and waited till evening should come on. And as they made merry, dusk evening came upon them. Then they went each one to his own house to lie down to rest.

But Telemachus, where his chamber was builded high up in the fair court, in a place with wide prospect, thither betook him to his bed, pondering many thoughts in his mind, and with him went trusty Eurycleia, and bare for him torches burning. She was the daughter of Ops, son of Peisenor, and Laertes bought her on a time with his wealth, while as yet she was in her first youth, and gave for her the worth of twenty oxen. She went with Telemachus and bare for him the burning torches: and of all the women of the household she loved him most, and she had nursed him when a little one. Then he opened the doors of the well-builded chamber and sat him on the bed and took off his soft doublet, and put it in the wise old woman's hands. So she folded the doublet and smoothed it, and hung it on a pin by the jointed bedstead, and went forth on her way from the room, and pulled to the door with the silver handle, and drew home the bar with the thong. There, all night through, wrapt in a fleece of wool, he meditated in his heart upon the journey that Athene had showed him.

BOOK II

Telemachus complains in vain, and borrowing a ship, goes secretly to Pylos by night. And how he was there received.

Now so soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, the dear son of Odysseus gat him up from his bed, and put on his raiment and cast his sharp sword about his shoulder, and beneath his smooth feet he bound his goodly sandals, and stept forth from his chamber in presence like a god. And straightway he bade the clear-voiced heralds to call the long-haired Achæans to the assembly. And the heralds called the gathering, and the Achæans were assembled quickly. Now when they were gathered and come together, he went on his way to the assembly holding in his hand a spear of bronze,—not alone he went, for two swift hounds bare him company. Then Athene shed on him a wondrous grace, and all the people marvelled at him as he came. And he sat in his father's seat and the elders gave place to him.

Then the lord Ægyptus spake among them first; bowed was he with age, and skilled in things past number. Now for this reason he spake, that his dear son, the warrior Antiphus, had gone in the hollow ships to Ilios. So weeping for his sake he made harangue and spake among them:

"Hearken now to me, ye men of Ithaca, to the word

that I shall say. Never hath our assembly or session been since the day that goodly Odysseus departed in the hollow ships. And now who was minded thus to assemble us? On what man hath such sore need come, of the young men or of the elder born? Hath he heard some tidings of the host now returning, which he might plainly declare to us, or doth he show forth and tell some other matter of the common weal? Methinks he is a true man—good luck be with him! Zeus vouchsafe him some good thing in his turn, even all his heart's desire!"

So spake he, and the dear son of Odysseus was glad at the omen of the word; nor sat he now much longer, but he burned to speak, and he stood in mid assembly; and the herald Peisenor, skilled in sage counsels, placed the staff in his hands. Then he spake, accosting the old man first:

"Old man, he is not far off, and soon shalt thou know it for thyself, he who called the folk together, even I: for sorrow hath come to me in chief. Neither have I heard any tidings of the host now returning, which I may plainly declare to you; neither do I show forth or tell any other matter of the common weal, but mine own need, for evil hath befallen my house, a double woe. First, I have lost my noble sire, who sometime was king among you here, and was gentle as a father; and now is there an evil yet greater far,

which surely shall soon make grievous havoc of my whole house and ruin all my livelihood. My mother did certain wooers beset sore against her will, even the sons of those men that here are the noblest. They are too craven to go to the house of her father Icarius, that he may himself set the bride-price for his daughter, and bestow her on whom he will, even on him who finds favour in his sight. But they resorting to our house day by day sacrifice oxen and sheep and fat goats, and keep revel, and drink the dark wine recklessly, and lo, our great wealth is wasted, for there is no man now alive such as Odysseus was, to keep ruin from the house. As for me I am nowise strong like him to ward mine own; verily to the end of my days shall I be a weakling and all unskilled in prowess. Truly I would defend me if but strength were mine; for deeds past sufferance have now been wrought, and now my house is wasted utterly beyond pretence of right. Resent it in your own hearts, and have regard to your neighbors who dwell around, and tremble ye at the anger of the gods, lest haply they turn upon you in wrath at your evil deeds. I pray you by Zeus and by Themis,[1] who looseth and gathereth the meeting of men, let be, my friends, and leave me alone to waste in bitter grief.

So spake he in wrath, and dashed the staff to the ground, and brake forth in tears; and pity fell on all

[1] [The goddess of law and order.]

the people. Then all the others held their peace, and none had the heart to answer Telemachus with hard words, but Antinoüs alone made answer, saying:

"Telemachus, proud of speech and unrestrained in fury, what is this thou hast said to put us to shame, and wouldst fasten on us reproach? Behold the fault is not in the Achæan wooers, but in thine own mother, for she is the craftiest of women. For it is now the third year, and the fourth is fast going by, since she began to deceive the minds of the Achæans in their breasts. She gives hope to all, and makes promises to every man, and sends them messages, but her mind is set on other things. And she hath devised in her heart this wile besides; she set up in her halls a mighty web, fine of woof and very wide, whereat she would weave, and anon she spake among us:

"'Ye princely youths, my wooers, now that the goodly Odysseus is dead, do ye abide patiently, how eager soever to speed on this marriage of mine, till I finish the robe; I would not that the threads perish to no avail, even this shroud for the hero Laertes, against the day when the ruinous doom shall bring him low, of death that lays men at their length. So shall none of the Achæan women in the land count it blame in me, as well might be, were he to lie without a winding-sheet, a man that had gotten great possessions.'

"So spake she, and our high hearts consented thereto.

So then in the day time she would weave the mighty web, and in the night unravel the same, when she had let place the torches by her. Thus for the space of three years she hid the thing by craft and beguiled the minds of the Achæans; but when the fourth year arrived and the seasons came round, then at the last one of her women who knew all declared it, and we found her unravelling the splendid web. Thus she finished it perforce and sore against her will. But as for thee, the wooers make thee answer thus, that thou mayest know it in thine own heart, thou and all the Achæans! Send away thy mother, and bid her be married to whomsoever her father commands, and whoso is well pleasing unto her. But if she will continue for long to vex the sons of the Achæans, pondering in her heart those things that Athene hath given her beyond women, knowledge of all fair handiwork, yea, and cunning wit, and wiles—so be it! For in despite of her the wooers will devour thy living and thy substance, so long as she is steadfast in such purpose as the gods now put within her breast: great renown for herself she winneth, but for thee regret for thy much livelihood. But we will neither go to our own lands, nor otherwhere, till she marry that man whom she will of the Achæans."

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: "Antinoüs, I may in no wise thrust from the house, against

her will, the woman that bare me, that reared me: while as for my father he is abroad on the earth, whether he be alive or dead. Moreover, it is hard for me to make heavy restitution to Icarius, as needs I must, if of mine own will I send my mother away. For I shall have evil at his hand, at the hand of her father, and some god will give me more besides, for my mother will call down the dire Avengers as she departs from the house, and I shall have blame of men; surely then I will never speak this word. Nay, if your own heart, even yours, is indignant, quit ye my halls, and busy yourselves with other feasts, eating your own substance, and going in turn from house to house. But if ye deem this a likelier and a better thing, that one man's goods should perish without atonement, then waste ye as ye will: and I will call upon the everlasting gods, if haply Zeus may grant that acts of recompense be made: so should ye hereafter perish in the halls without atonement."

So spake Telemachus, and in answer to his prayer did Zeus, of the far-borne voice, send forth two eagles in flight, from on high, from the mountain-crest. Awhile they flew as fleet as the blasts of the wind side by side, with straining of their pinions. But when they had now reached the mid assembly, the place of many voices, there they wheeled about and flapped their strong wings, and looked down upon the heads of all,

and destruction was in their gaze. Then tore they with their talons each the other's cheeks and neck on every side, and so sped to the right across the dwellings and the city of the people. And the men marvelled at the birds when they had sight of them, and pondered in their hearts the things that should come to pass. Yea and the old man, the lord Halitherses son of Mastor spake among them, for he excelled his peers in knowledge of birds, and in uttering words of fate. With good will he made harangue and spake among them:

"Hearken to me now, ye men of Ithaca, to the word that I shall say: and mainly to the wooers do I show forth and tell these things, seeing that a mighty woe is rolling upon them. For Odysseus shall not long be away from his friends, nay, even now, it may be, he is near, and sowing the seeds of death and fate for these men, every one; and he will be a bane to many another likewise of us who dwell in clear-seen Ithaca. But long ere that falls out let us advise us how we may make an end of their mischief; yea, let them of their ownselves make an end, for this is the better way for them, as will soon be seen."

And Eurymachus, son of Polybus, answered him, saying: "Go now, old man, get thee home and prophesy to thine own children, lest haply they suffer harm hereafter. And I myself will give a word of counsel to Telemachus in presence of you all. Let him com-

mand his mother to return to her father's house; and her kinsfolk will furnish a wedding feast, and array the gifts of wooing, exceeding many, all that should go back with a daughter dearly beloved. For ere that, I trow, we sons of the Achæans will not cease from our rough wooing, since, come what may, we fear not any man, no, not Telamachus, full of words though he be, nor soothsaying do we heed, whereof thou, old man, pratest idly, and art hated yet more. His substance too shall be woefully devoured, nor shall recompense ever be made, so long as she shall put off the Achæans in the matter of her marriage."

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: "Eurymachus, and ye others, that are lordly wooers, I entreat you no more concerning this nor speak thereof, for the gods have knowledge of it now and all the Achæans. But come, give me a swift ship and twenty men, who shall accomplish for me my voyage to and fro. For I will go to Sparta and to sandy Pylos to inquire concerning the return of my father that is long afar, if perchance any man shall tell me aught, or if I may hear the voice from Zeus, that chiefly brings tidings to men. If I shall hear news of the life and the returning of my father, then verily I may endure the wasting for yet a year; but if I shall hear that he is dead and gone, let me then return to my own dear country, and pile his mound, and over it pay

burial rights full many as is due and I will give my mother to a husband."

So with that word he sat him down; then in the midst up rose Mentor, the companion of noble Odysseus. He it was to whom Odysseus, as he departed in the fleet, had given the charge over all his house, that it should obey the old man, and that he should keep all things safe. With good will he now made harangue and spake among them:

"Hearken to me now, ye men of Ithaca, to the word that I shall say. Henceforth let not any sceptred king be kind and gentle with all his heart, nor minded to do righteously, but let him alway be a hard man and work unrighteousness: for behold, there is none of the people whose lord he was that remembereth divine Odysseus, who was gentle as a father. Howsoever, it is not that I grudge the lordly wooers their deeds of violence in the evil devices of their heart. For at the hazard of their own heads they violently devour the household of Odysseus, and say of him that he will come no more again. But I am indeed wroth with the rest of the people, to see how ye all sit thus speechless, and do not cry shame upon the wooers, and put them down, ye that are so many and they so few."

And Leocritus, son of Euenor, answered him, saying: "Mentor infatuate, with thy wandering wits, what word has thou spoken, that callest upon them to

put us down? Nay, it is a hard thing to fight about a feast, and that with men who are even more in number than you. Though Odysseus of Ithaca himself should come and were eager of heart to drive forth from the hall the lordly wooers that feast throughout his house, yet should his wife have no joy of his coming, though she yearns for him;—But even there should he meet foul doom, if he fought with those that outnumbered him; so thou hast not spoken aright. But as for the people, come now, scatter yourselves each one to his own lands, but Mentor and Halitherses will speed this man's voyage, for they are friends of his house from of old. Yet after all, methinks that long time he will abide and seek tidings in Ithaca, and never accomplish this voyage."

Thus he spake, and in haste they broke up the assembly. So they were scattered each one to his own dwelling, while the wooers departed to the house of divine Odysseus.

Then Telemachus, going far apart to the shore of the sea, laved his hands in the grey sea water, and prayed unto Athene, saying: "Hear me, thou who yesterday didst come in thy godhead to our house, and badest me go in a ship across the misty seas, to seek tidings of the return of my father that is long gone: but all this my purpose do the Achæans delay, and mainly the wooers in the naughtiness of their pride."

So spake he in prayer, and Athene drew nigh him in the likeness of Mentor, in fashion and in voice, and she spake and hailed him in winged words:

"Telemachus, hereafter thou shalt not be craven or witless, if indeed thou hast a drop of thy father's blood and a portion of his spirit. Nor shall thy voyage be vain or unfulfilled. Wherefore now take no heed of the counsel or the purpose of the senseless wooers, for they are in no way wise or just: neither know they aught of death and of black fate, which already is close upon them, that they are all to perish in one day. But the voyage on which thy heart is set shall not long be lacking to thee—so faithful a friend of thy father am I, who will furnish thee a swift ship and myself be thy companion. Go thou to the house, and consort with the wooers, and make ready corn, and bestow all in vessels, the wine in jars and barley-flour, the marrow of men, in well-sewn skins; and I will lightly gather in the township a crew that offer themselves willingly. There are many ships, new and old, in seagirt Ithaca; of these I will choose out the best for thee, and we will quickly rig her and launch her on the broad deep."

So spake Athene, daughter of Zeus, and Telemachus made no long tarrying, when he had heard the voice of the goddess. He went on his way towards the house, heavy at heart, and there he found the noble

wooers in the halls, flaying goats and singeing swine in the court. And Antinoüs laughed out and went straight to Telemachus, and clasped his hand and spake and hailed him:

"Telemachus, proud of speech and unrestrained in fury, let no evil word any more be in thy heart, nor evil work, but let me see thee eat and drink as of old. And the Achæans will make thee ready all things without fail, a ship and chosen oarsmen, that thou mayest come the quicker to fair Pylos, to seek tidings of thy noble father."

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying, "Antinoüs, in no wise in your proud company can I sup in peace, and make merry with a quiet mind. Is it a little thing, ye wooers, that in time past ye wasted many good things of my getting, while as yet I was a child? But now that I am a man grown, and learn the story from the lips of others, and my spirit waxeth within me, I will seek to let loose upon you evil fates, as I may, going either to Pylos for help, or abiding here in this township. Yea, I will go, nor vain shall the voyage be whereof I speak; a passenger on another's ship go I, for I am not to have a ship nor oarsmen of mine own; so in your wisdom ye have thought it for the better."

He spake and snatched his hand from out the hand of Antinoüs, lightly, and all the while the wooers were

busy feasting through the house; and they mocked him and sharply taunted him, and thus would some proud youth speak:

"In very truth Telemachus planneth our destruction. He will bring a rescue either from sandy Pylos, or even it may be from Sparta, so terribly is he set on slaying us. Or else he will go to Ephyra, a fruitful land, to fetch a poisonous drug that he may cast it into the bowl and make an end of all of us."

And again another proud youth would say: "Who knows but that he himself, if he goes hence on the hollow ship, may perish wandering far from his friends, even as Odysseus? So should we have yet more ado, for then must we divide among us all his substance, and moreover give the house to his mother to possess it, and to him whosoever should wed her."

So spake they; but he stepped down into the vaulted treasure-chamber of his father, a spacious room, where gold and bronze lay piled, and raiment in coffers, and fragrant olive oil in plenty. And there stood casks of sweet wine and old, full of the unmixed drink divine, all orderly ranged by the wall, ready if ever Odysseus should come home, albeit after travail and much pain. And the close-fitted doors, the folding doors, were shut, and night and day there abode within a dame in charge, who guarded all in the fulness of her wisdom, Eurycleia. Telemachus now

called her into the chamber and spake unto her saying:

"Mother, come draw off for me sweet wine in jars, the choicest next to that thou keepest mindful ever of that ill fated one, Odysseus, if perchance he may come I know not whence, having avoided death and the fates. So fill twelve jars, and close each with his lid, and pour me barley-meal into well-sewn skins, and let there be twenty measures of the grain of bruised barley-meal. Let none know this but thyself! As for these things let them all be got together; for in the evening I will take them with me, at the time that my mother hath gone to her upper chamber and turned her thoughts to sleep. Lo, to Sparta I go and to sandy Pylos to seek tidings of my dear father's return, if haply I may hear thereof."

So spake he, and the good nurse Eurycleia wailed aloud, and making lament spake to him winged words: "Ah, wherefore, dear child, hath such a thought arisen in thine heart? How shouldest thou fare over wide lands, thou that art an only child and well-beloved? As for him he hath perished, far from his own country in the land of strangers. And yonder men, so soon as thou art gone, will devise mischief against thee thereafter, that thou mayest perish by guile, and they will share among them all this wealth of thine. Nay, abide here, settled on thine own lands: thou hast no need upon the deep unharvested to suffer evil and go wandering."

Then wise Telemachus answered her, saying: "Take heart, nurse, for lo, this my purpose came not but of a god. But swear to tell no word thereof to my dear mother, till at least it shall be the eleventh or twelfth day from hence, or till she miss me of herself, and hear of my departure, that so she may not mar her fair face with her tears."

Thus he spake, and the old woman sware a great oath by the gods not to reveal it. But when she had sworn that oath, straightway she drew off the wine for him in jars, and poured barley-meal into well-sewn skins, and Telemachus departed to the house and consorted with the wooers.

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, turned to other thoughts. In the likeness of Telemachus she went all through the city, and stood by each one of the men and spake her saying, and bade them gather at even by the swift ship. Furthermore, she craved a swift ship of Noëmon, famous son of Phronius, and right gladly he promised it.

Now the sun sank and all the ways were darkened. Then at length she let drag the swift ship to the sea and stored within it all such tackling as decked ships carry. And she moored it at the far end of the harbour and the good company was gathered together, and the goddess cheered on all.

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, turned to other

thoughts. She went on her way to the house of divine Odysseus; and there she shed sweet sleep upon the wooers and made them distraught in their drinking, and cast the cups from their hands. And they arose up to go to rest throughout the city, nor sat they yet a long while, for slumber was falling on their eyelids. Now grey-eyed Athene spake unto Telemachus, and called him from out the fair-lying halls, taking the likeness of Mentor, both in fashion and in voice:

"Telemachus, thy goodly-greaved companions are sitting already at their oars, it is thy despatch they are waiting. Nay then, let us go, that we delay them not long from the way."

Therewith Pallas Athene led the way quickly, and he followed hard in the steps of the goddess. Now when they had come down to the ship and to the sea, they found the long-haired youths of the company on the shore; and the mighty prince Telemachus spake among them:

"Come hither, friends, let us carry the corn on board, for all is now together in the room, and my mother knows nought thereof, nor any of the maidens of the house: one woman only heard my saying."

Thus he spake and led the way, and they went with him. So they brought all and stowed it in the decked ship, according to the word of the dear son of Odysseus. Then Telemachus climbed the ship and Athene went

before him, and behold, she sat her down in the stern, and near her sat Telemachus. And the men loosed the hawsers and climbed on board themselves, and sat upon the benches. And grey-eyed Athene sent them a favourable gale, a fresh West Wind, singing over the wine-dark sea.

And Telemachus called unto his company and bade them lay hands on the tackling, and they hearkened to his call. So they raised the mast of pine tree and set it in the hole of the cross plank, and made it fast with forestays, and hauled up the white sails with twisted ropes of oxhide. And the wind filled the belly of the sail, and the dark wave seethed loudly round the stem of the running ship, and she fleeted over the wave, accomplishing her path. Then they made all fast in the swift black ship, and set mixing bowls brimmed with wine, and poured drink-offering to the deathless gods that are from everlasting, and in chief to the grey-eyed daughter of Zeus. So all night long and through the dawn the ship cleft her way.

BOOK III

Nestor entertains Telemachus at Pylos and tells him how the Greeks departed from Troy; and sends him for further information to Sparta.

Now the sun arose and left the lovely mere, speeding to the brazen heavens, to give light to the immortals

and to mortal men on the earth, the graingiver, and they reached Pylos, the stablished castle of Neleus. There the people were doing sacrifice on the sea shore, slaying black bulls without spot to the dark-haired god, the shaker of the earth. Nine companies there were and five hundred men sat in each, and in every company they held nine bulls ready to hand. Just as they had tasted the inner parts, and were burning the slices of the thighs on the altar to the god, the others were bearing straight to land, and brailed up the sails of the gallant ship, and moored her, and themselves came forth. And Telemachus too stept forth from the ship and Athene led the way. And the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake first to him, saying:

"Telemachus, thou needest not now be abashed, no, not one whit. For to this very end didst thou sail over the deep, that thou mightest hear tidings of thy father, even where the earth closed over him, and what manner of death he met. But come now, go straight to Nestor, tamer of horses: let us learn what counsel he hath in the secret of his heart. And beseech him thyself that he may give unerring answer; and he will not lie to thee, for he is very wise."

The wise Telemachus answered, saying: "Mentor, and how shall I go, how shall I greet him, I, who am untried in words of wisdom? Moreover a young man may well be abashed to question an elder."

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake to him again: "Telemachus, thou shalt bethink thee of somewhat in thine own breast, and somewhat the god will give thee to say. For thou, methinks, of all men, wert not born and bred without the will of the gods."

So spake Athene and led the way quickly; and he followed hard in the steps of the goddess. And they came to the gathering and the session of the men of Pylos. There was Nestor seated with his sons, and round him his company making ready the feast, and roasting some of the flesh and spitting other. Now when they saw the strangers, they went all together, and clasped their hands in welcome, and would have them sit down. First Peisistratus son of Nestor, drew nigh, and took the hands of each, and made them to sit down at the feast on soft fleeces upon the sea sand, beside his brother Thrasymedes and his father. And he gave them messes of the inner meat, and poured wine into a golden cup, and pledging her, he spake unto Pallas Athene, daughter of Zeus, lord of the aegis[1]:

"Pray, now, my guest, to the lord Poseidon, even as it is his feast whereon ye have chanced in coming hither. And when thou hast made drink-offering and prayed, as is due, give thy friend also the cup of honeyed wine to make offering thereof, inasmuch as he too,

[1] The storm mantle of Zeus.

methinks, prayeth to the deathless gods, for all men stand in need of the gods. Howbeit he is younger and mine own equal in years, therefore to thee first will I give the golden chalice."

Therewith he placed in her hand the cup of sweet wine. And Athene rejoiced in the wisdom and judgment of the man, in that he had given to her first the chalice of gold. And straightway she prayed, and that instantly,[1] to the lord Poseidon:

"Hear me, Poseidon, girdler of the earth, and grudge not the fulfilment of this labour in answer to our prayer. To Nestor first and to his sons vouchsafe renown, and thereafter grant to all the people of Pylos a gracious recompense for this splendid hecatomb. Grant moreover that Telemachus and I may return, when we have acomplished that for which we came hither with our swift black ship."

Now as she prayed on this wise, herself the while was fulfilling the prayer. And she gave Telemachus the fair two-handled cup; and in like manner prayed the dear son of Odysseus. Then, when the others had roasted the outer parts and had drawn them off the spits, they divided the messes and shared the glorious feast. But when they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, Nestor of Gerenia, lord of chariots, first spake among them:

[1] [Earnestly.]

"Now is the better time to inquire and ask of the strangers who they are, now that they have had their delight of food. Strangers, who are ye? Whence sail ye over the wet ways? On some trading enterprise, or at adventure do ye rove, even as sea-robbers, over the brine, for they wander at hazard of their own lives bringing bale to alien men?"

Then wise Telemachus answered him and spake with courage, for Athene herself had put boldness in his heart, that he might ask about his father who was afar, and that he might be had in good report among men:

"Nestor, son of Neleus, great glory of the Achæans, thou askest whence we are, and I will surely tell thee all. We have come forth out of Ithaca; and this our quest whereof I speak is a matter of mine own, and not of the common weal. I follow after the far-spread rumour of my father, if haply I may hear thereof, even of the goodly steadfast Odysseus, who upon a time, men say, fought by thy side and sacked the city of the Trojans. For none can surely declare the place where he hath perished, whether he was smitten by foeman on the mainland, or lost upon the deep. So now am I come hither to thy knees, if perchance thou art willing to tell me of his pitiful death, as one that saw it with thine own eyes, or heard the story from some other wanderer. And speak me no soft words in pity, but tell me plainly what sight thou didst get of him."

Then Nestor of Gerenia, lord of chariots, answered him: "My friend, since thou hast brought sorrow back to mind, behold, this is the story of the woe which we endured in that land, we sons of the Achæans, unrestrained in fury, and of all that we bore in wanderings after spoil, sailing with our ships over the misty deep, wheresoever Achilles led; and of all our war round the mighty burg of king Priam. Yea and there the best of us were slain. There lies valiant Aias, and there Achilles, and there Patroclus, the peer of the gods in counsel, and there my own dear son, strong and noble, Antilochus, that excelled in speed of foot and in the fight. And many other ills we suffered beside these; who of mortal men could tell the tale? Nay none, though thou wert to abide here for five years, ay, and for six, and ask of all the ills which the goodly Achæans then endured. Ere all was told thou wouldest be weary and turn to thine own country. For nine whole years we were busy about the Trojans, devising their ruin with all manner of craft; and scarce did Zeus bring it to pass. There never a man durst match with goodly Odysseus in wisdom, for he very far outdid the rest in all manner of craft. Now look you, all the while that myself and goodly Odysseus were there, we never spake diversely either in the assembly or in the council, but always were of one mind, and advised the Argives with understanding and sound

counsel, how all might be for the very best. But after we had sacked the steep city of Priam, and had departed in our ships, a god scattered the Achæans, and Zeus devised in his heart a pitiful returning for the Argives. So I came, dear child, without tidings, nor know I aught of those others, which of the Achæans were saved and which were lost. But all that I hear tell of as I sit in our halls, thou shalt learn as it is meet, and I will hide nothing from thee. Safely, they say, came the Myrmidons, the wild spearsmen, whom the famous son of high-souled Achilles led; and Idomeneus brought all his company to Crete, all that escaped the war, and from him the sea gat none. And of Agamemnon even yourselves have heard, far apart though ye dwell, how he came, and how Ægisthus devised his evil end; but verily he himself paid a terrible reckoning. So good a thing it is that a son of the dead should still be left, even as that son also took vengeance on the slayer of his father."

And wise Telemachus answered him, and said: Nestor, son of Neleus, great glory of the Achæans, verily and indeed he avenged himself, and the Achæans shall noise his fame abroad, that even those may hear who are yet for to be. Oh that the gods would clothe me with such strength as his, that I might take vengeance on the wooers for their cruel transgression, who wantonly devise against me infatuate deeds!"

Then Nestor, lord of chariots, made answer: "Dear friend, seeing thou dost call these things to my remembrance and speak thereof, they tell me that many wooers for thy mother's hand plan mischief within the halls in thy despite. Say, dost thou willingly submit thee to oppression, or do the people through the land hate thee, obedient to the voice of a god? Who knows but that Odysseus may some day come and requite their violence, either himself alone or all the host of the Achæans with him? Ah, if but grey-eyed Athene were inclined to love thee, as once she cared exceedingly for the renowned Odysseus in the land of the Trojans, where we Achæans were sore afflicted,—for never yet have I seen the gods show forth such manifest love, as then did Pallas standing manifest by him,—if she would be pleased so to love thee and to care for thee, then might certain of them clean forget their marriage."

And wise Telemachus answered him, saying: "Old man, in no wise methinks shall this word be accomplished. This is a hard saying of thine, awe comes over me. Not for my hopes shall this thing come to pass, not even if the gods so willed it."

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake to him again: "Telemachus, what word hath escaped the door of thy lips? Lightly might a god, if so he would, bring a man safe home even from afar. Rather myself would I have travail and much pain ere I came home and saw the day of my returning, than come back and

straightway perish on my own hearth-stone, even as Agamemnon perished by guile at the hands of his own wife and of Ægisthus."

Then said Nestor, lord of chariots: "My friend, wander not long far away from home, leaving thy substance behind thee and men in thy house so wanton, lest they divide and utterly devour all thy wealth, and thou shalt have gone on a vain journey. Rather I bid and command thee to go to Menelaus, for he hath lately come from a strange country, from the land of men whence none would hope in his heart to return, whom once the storms have driven wandering into so wide a sea. Thence not even the birds can make their way in the space of one year, so great a sea it is and terrible. But go now with thy ship and with thy company, or if thou hast a mind to fare by land, I have a chariot and horses at thy service, yea and my sons to do thy will, who will be thy guides to goodly Lacedæmon, where is Menelaus of the fair hair. Do thou thyself entreat him, that he may give thee unerring answer. He will not lie to thee, for he is very wise."

Thus he spake, and the sun went down and darkness came on. Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake among them, saying: "Come, cut up the tongues of the victims and mix the wine, that we may pour forth before Poseidon and the other deathless gods, and so may bethink us of sleep, for it is the hour for

sleep. For already has the light gone beneath the west, and it is not seemly to sit long at a banquet of the gods, but to be going home."

So spake the daughter of Zeus, and they hearkened to her voice. And the henchmen poured water over their hands, and pages crowned the mixing bowls with drink, and served out the wine to all, after they had first poured for libation into each cup in turn; and they cast the tongues upon the fire, and stood up and poured the drink offering thereon. But when they had poured forth and had drunken to their hearts' content, Athene and godlike Telemachus were both set on returning to the hollow ship; but Nestor would have stayed them, and accosted them, saying: "Zeus forfend it, and all the other deathless gods, that ye should depart from my house to the swift ship, as from the dwelling of one that is utterly without raiment or a needy man, who hath not rugs or blankets many in his house whereon to sleep softly, he or his guests. Nay not so, I have rugs and fair blankets by me. Never, methinks, shall the dear son of this man, even of Odysseus, lay him down upon the ship's deck, while as yet I am alive, and my children after me are left in my hall to entertain strangers, whoso may chance to come to my house."

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake to him again: "Yea, herein hast thou spoken aright, dear father: and Telemachus may well obey thee, for before

all things this is meet. Behold, he shall now depart with thee, that he may sleep in thy halls; as for me I will go to the black ship, that I may cheer my company and tell them all. For I avow me to be the one elder among them; those others are but younger men, who follow for love of him, all of them of like age with the high-souled Telemachus. There will I lay me down by the black hollow ship this night; but in the morning I will go to the Cauconians high of heart, where somewhat of mine is owing to me, no small debt nor of yesterday. But do thou send this man upon his way with thy chariot and thy son, since he hath come to thy house, and give him horses the lightest of foot and chief in strength."

Therewith grey-eyed Athene departed in the semblance of a sea-eagle; and amazement fell on all that saw it, and the old man he marvelled when his eyes beheld it. And he took the hand of Telemachus and spake and hailed him:

"My friend, methinks that thou wilt in no sort be a coward and a weakling, if indeed in thy youth the gods thus follow with thee to be thy guides. For truly this is none other of those who keep the mansions of Olympus, save only the daughter of Zeus, she that honoured thy good father too among the Argives. Nay be gracious, queen, and vouchsafe a goodly fame to me, even to me and to my sons and to my wife revered.

And I in turn will sacrifice to thee a yearling heifer, broad of brow, unbroken, which man never yet hath led beneath the yoke. Such an one will I offer to thee, and gild her horns with gold."

Even so he spake in prayer, and Athene heard him. Then Nestor led them, even his sons and the husbands of his daughters, to his own fair house. But when they had reached this prince's famous halls, they sat down all orderly on seats and high chairs; and when they were come, the old man mixed well for them a bowl of sweet wine, which now in the eleventh year from the vintaging the housewife opened, and unloosed the string that fastened the lid. The old man let mix a bowl thereof, and prayed instantly to Athene as he poured forth before her.

But after they had poured forth and had drunken to their heart's content, these went each one to his own house to lie down to rest. But Nestor would needs have Telemachus, son of divine Odysseus, to sleep there on a jointed bedstead beneath the echoing gallery, and by him Peisistratus of the good ashen spear, leader of men, who alone of his sons was yet unwed in his halls.

So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, Nestor gat him up from his bed, and after they had sacrificed a heifer to Athene, and had put from them the desire of meat and drink, Nestor first spake among them:

"Lo now, my sons, yoke for Telemachus horses with

flowing mane and lead them beneath the car, that he may get forward on his way."

Even so he spake, and they gave good heed and hearkened; and quickly they yoked the swift horses beneath the chariot. And the dame that kept the stores placed therein corn and wine and dainties, such as princes eat, the fosterlings of Zeus. So Telemachus stept up into the goodly car, and with him Peisistratus, son of Nestor leader of men, likewise climbed the car and grasped the reins in his hands, and he touched the horses with the whip to start them, and nothing loth the pair flew toward the plain, and left the steep citadel of Pylos. So all day long they swayed the yoke they bore upon their necks.

Now the sun sank and all the ways were darkened. And they came to Pheræ, to the house of Diocles. There they rested for the night, and by them he set the entertainment of strangers.

Now so soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, they yoked the horses and mounted the inlaid car. And forth they drave from the gateway and the echoing gallery, and Peisistratus touched the horses with the whip to start them, and the pair flew onward nothing loth. So they came to the wheat-bearing plain, and thenceforth they pressed toward the end: in such wise did the swift horses speed forward. Now the sun sank and all the ways were darkened.

BOOK IV

Telemachus' entertainment at Sparta, where Menelaus tells him what befell many of the Greeks on their return; that Odysseus was with Calypso in the isle Ogygia, as he was told by Proteus.

And they came to Lacedæmon lying low among the caverned hills, and drave to the dwelling of renowned Menelaus. Him they found giving a feast in his house to many friends of his kin, a feast for the wedding of his noble son and daughter. So they were feasting through the great vaulted hall, the neighbours and the kinsmen of renowned Menelaus, making merry; and among them a divine minstrel was singing to the lyre, and as he began the song two tumblers in the company whirled through the midst of them.

Meanwhile those twain, the hero Telemachus and the splendid son of Nestor, made halt at the entry of the gate, they and their horses. And the lord Eteoneus came forth and saw them, the ready squire of renowned Menelaus; and he went through the palace to bear the tidings to the shepherd of the people, and standing near spake to him winged words:

"Menelaus, fosterling of Zeus, here are two strangers, whosoever they be, two men like to the lineage of great Zeus. Say, shall we loose their swift horses from under the yoke, or send them onward to some other host who shall receive them kindly?"

Then in sore displeasure spake to him Menelaus of the fair hair: "Eteoneus, truly thou wert not a fool aforetime, but now for this once, like a child thou talkest folly. Surely ourselves ate much hospitable cheer of other men, ere we twain came hither, even if in time to come Zeus haply give us rest from affliction. Nay go, unyoke the horses of the strangers, and as for the men, lead them forward to the house to feast with us."

So spake he, and Eteoneus hasted from the hall, and called the other ready squires to follow with him. So they loosed the sweating horses from beneath the yoke, and fastened them at the stalls of the horses, and threw beside them spelt, and therewith mixed white barley, and tilted the chariot against the shining faces of the gateway, and led the men into the hall divine. And they beheld and marvelled as they gazed throughout the palace of the king, the fosterling of Zeus; for there was a gleam as it were of sun or moon through the lofty palace of renowned Menelaus. But after they had gazed their fill, they went to the polished baths and bathed them. Now when the maidens had bathed them and anointed them with olive oil, and cast about them thick cloaks and doublets, they sat on chairs by Menelaus, son of Atreus. And a handmaid bare water for the hands in a goodly golden ewer, and poured it forth over a silver basin to wash withal; and to their side she drew a polished table, and a grave dame bare food

and set it by them, and laid upon the board many dainties, giving freely of such things as she had by her, and a carver lifted and placed by them platters of divers kinds of flesh, and nigh them he set golden bowls. So Menelaus of the fair hair greeted the twain and spake:

"Taste ye food and be glad, and thereafter when ye have supped, we will ask what men ye are; for the blood of your parents is not lost in you, but ye are of the line of men that are sceptred kings, the fosterlings of Zeus; for no churls could beget sons like you."

So spake he, and took and set before them the fat ox-chine roasted, which they had given him as his own mess by way of honour. And they stretched forth their hands upon the good cheer set before them. Now when they had put from them the desire of meat and drink Telemachus spake to the son of Nestor, holding his head close to him, that those others might not hear:

"Son of Nestor, delight of my heart, mark the flashing of bronze through the echoing halls, and the flashing of gold and of amber and of silver and of ivory. Such like, methinks, is the court of Olympian Zeus within, for the world of things that are here; wonder comes over me as I look thereon."

And as he spake Menelaus of the fair hair was aware of him, and uttering his voice spake to them winged words:

"Children dear, of a truth no one of mortal men may contend with Zeus, for his mansions and his treasures are everlasting: but of men there may be who will vie with me in treasure, or there may be none. Yea, for after many a woe and wanderings manifold, I brought my wealth home in ships, and in the eighth year came hither. I roamed over Cyprus and Phœnicia and Egypt, and reached the Æthiopians and Sidonians and Erembi and Libya, where lambs are horned from the birth. While I was yet roaming in those lands, gathering much livelihood, meantime another slew my brother privily, at unawares, by the guile of his accursed wife. Thus, look you, I have no joy of my lordship among these my possessions: and ye are like to have heard hereof from your fathers, whosoever they be, for I have suffered much and let a house go to ruin that was stablished fair, and had in it much choice substance. I would that I had but a third part of those my riches, and dwelt in my halls, and that those men were yet safe, who perished of old in the wide land of Troy, far from Argos, the pastureland of horses. Howbeit, though I bewail them all and sorrow oftentimes as I sit in our halls, yet for them all I make no such dole, despite my grief, as for one only, who causes me to loathe both sleep and meat, when I think upon him. For no one of the Achæans toiled so greatly as Odysseus toiled and adventured himself: but to him it was to be but

labour and trouble, and to me grief ever comfortless for his sake, so long as he is afar, nor know we aught, whether he be alive or dead. Yea methinks they lament him, even that old Laertes and the constant Penelope and Telemachus, whom he left a child new-born in his house."

So spake he, and in the heart of Telemachus he stirred a yearning to lament his father; and at his father's name he let a tear fall from his eyelids to the ground, and held up his purple mantle with both his hands before his eyes. And Menelaus marked him and mused in his mind and his heart whether he should leave him to speak of his father, or first question him and prove him in every word.

While yet he pondered these things in his mind and in his heart, Helen came forth from her fragrant vaulted chamber, like Artemis of the golden arrows; and with her came Adraste and set for her the well-wrought chair, and Alcippe bare a rug of soft wool, and Phylo bare a silver basket which Alcandre gave her, the wife of Polybus, who dwelt in Thebes of Egypt, where is the chiefest store of wealth in the houses. He gave two silver baths to Menelaus, and tripods twain, and ten talents of gold. And besides all this, his wife bestowed on Helen lovely gifts; a golden distaff did she give, and a silver basket with wheels beneath, and the rims thereof were finished with gold.

This it was that the handmaid Phylo bare and set beside her, filled with dressed yarn, and across it was laid a distaff charged with wool of violet blue. So Helen sat her down in the chair, and beneath was a footstool for the feet. And anon she spake to her lord and questioned him of each thing:

"Menelaus, fosterling of Zeus, know we now who these men avow themselves to be that have come under our roof? Shall I dissemble or shall I speak the truth? Nay, I am minded to tell it. None, I say, have I ever yet seen so like another, man nor woman—wonder comes over me as I look on him—as this man is like the son of great-hearted Odysseus, Telemachus, whom he left a new-born child in his house, when for the sake of me, shameless woman that I was, ye Achæans came up under Troy with bold war in your hearts."

And Menelaus of the fair hair answered her, saying: "Now I too, lady, mark the likeness even as thou tracest it. For such as these were his feet, such his hands, and the glances of his eyes, and his head, and his hair withal. Yea, and even now I was speaking of Odysseus, as I remembered him, of all his woeful travail for my sake; when, lo, he let fall a bitter tear beneath his brows, and held his purple cloak up before his eyes."

And Peisistratus, son of Nestor, answered, him, saying: "Menelaus, son of Atreus, fosterling of Zeus,

leader of the host, assuredly this is the son of that very man, even as thou sayest. But he is of a sober wit, and thinketh it shame in his heart on this his first coming to make show of presumptuous words in the presence of thee, in whose voice we twain delight as in the voice of a god. Now Nestor, lord of chariots, sent me forth to be his guide on the way: for he desired to see thee that thou mightest put into his heart some word or work. For a son hath many griefs in his halls when his father is away, if perchance he hath none to stand by him. Even so it is now with Telemachus; his father is away, nor hath he others in the township to defend him from distress."

And Menelaus of the fair hair answered him, and said: "Lo now, in good truth there has come unto my house the son of a friend indeed, who for my sake endured many adventures. And I thought to welcome him on his coming more nobly than all the other Argives, if but Olympian Zeus had vouchsafed us a return over the sea in our swift ships. And in Argos I would have given him a city to dwell in, and established for him a house, and brought him forth from Ithaca with his substance and his son and all his people. Then ofttimes would we have held converse here, and nought would have parted us, the welcoming and the welcomed, ere the black cloud of death overshadowed us."

So spake he, and in the hearts of all he stirred the de-

sire of lamentation. She wept, even Argive Helen the daughter of Zeus, and Telemachus wept, and Menelaus the son or Atreus; nay, nor did the son of Nestor keep tearless eyes.

Then Helen, daughter of Zeus, turned to new thoughts. Presently she cast a drug into the wine whereof they drank, a drug to lull all pain and anger, and bring forgetfulness of every sorrow. Whoso should drink a draught thereof, when it is mingled in the bowl, on that day he would let no tear fall down his cheeks, not though his mother and his father died, not though men slew his brother or dear son with the sword before his face, and his own eyes beheld it. Now after she had cast in the drug and bidden pour fourth of the wine, she made answer once again, and spake:

"Now verily, sit ye down and feast in the halls, and take ye joy in the telling of tales, and I will tell you one that fits the time. Now all of them I could not tell or number, so many as were the adventures of Odysseus of the hardy heart; but, ah, what a deed was this he wrought and dared in his hardiness in the land of the Trojans, where ye Achæans suffered affliction. He subdued his body with unseemly stripes, and a sorry covering he cast about his shoulders, and in the fashion of a servant he went down into the wide-wayed city of the foemen, and he hid himself in the guise of a beggar. In this semblance he passed into the city of the

Trojans, and they wist not who he was and I alone knew him in that guise, and I kept questioning him, but in his subtlety he avoided me. But when at last I was about washing him and anointing him with olive oil and had put on him raiment, and sworn a great oath not to reveal Odysseus amid the Trojans, ere he reached the swift ships and the huts, even then he told me all the purpose of the Achæans. And after slaying many of the Trojans with the long sword, he returned to the Argives and brought back word again of all. Then the other Trojan women wept aloud, but my soul was glad, for already my heart was turned to go back again even to my home: and I groaned for the blindness that Aphrodite gave me, when she led me thither away from mine own country, forsaking my child and my lord, that lacked not aught whether for wisdom or yet for beauty."

And Menelaus of the fair hair answered her, saying: "Verily all this tale, lady, thou hast duly told. Ere now have I learned the counsel and the thought of many heroes, and travelled over many a land, but never yet have mine eyes beheld any such man of heart as was Odysseus; such another deed as he wrought and dared in his hardiness even in the shapen horse,[1] wherein sat all we chiefs of the Argives, bearing to the Trojans death and doom. Anon thou camest thither, and sure

[1] [The hollow horse of wood, which the Greeks used as a stratagem for the capture of Troy.]

some god must have bidden thee, who wished to bring glory to the Trojans. Yea and godlike Deiphobus went with thee on thy way. Thrice thou didst go round about the hollow ambush and handle it, calling aloud on the chiefs of the Argives by name, and making thy voice like the voices of the wives of all the Argives. Now I and the son of Tydeus and goodly Odysseus sat in the midst and heard thy call; and verily we twain had a desire to start up and come forth or presently to answer from within; but Odysseus stayed and held us there, despite our eagerness. Then all the other sons of the Achæans held their peace, but Anticlus alone was still minded to answer thee. Howbeit Odysseus firmly closed his mouth with strong hands, and so saved all the Achæans, and held him until such time as Pallas Athene led thee back."

Then wise Telemachus answered him, and said: "Menelaus, son of Atreus, fosterling of Zeus, leader of the host, all the more grievous it is! for in no way did this courage ward from him pitiful destruction, not though his heart within him had been very iron. But come, bid us to bed, that forthwith we may take our joy of rest beneath the spell of sleep."

So spake he, and Argive Helen bade her handmaids set out bedsteads beneath the gallery, and fling on them fair purple blankets and spread coverlets above, and thereon lay thick mantles to be a clothing over all. So

they went from the hall with torch in hand, and spread the beds, and the henchman led forth the guests. Thus they slept there in the outer gallery of the house, the hero Telemachus and the splendid son of Nestor. But the son of Atreus slept, as his custom was, in the inmost chamber of the lofty house, and by him lay long-robed Helen, that fair lady.

Soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, Menelaus of the loud war-shout gat him up from his bed and put on his raiment, and cast his sharp sword about his shoulder, and beneath his smooth feet bound his goodly sandals, and stept forth from his chamber, in presence like a god, and sat by Telemachus, and spake and hailed him:

"To what end hath thy need brought thee hither, hero Telemachus, unto fair Lacedæmon, over the broad back of the sea? Is it a matter of the common weal or of thine own? Herein tell me the plain truth."

Then wise Telemachus answered him, and said: "Menelaus, son of Atreus, fosterling of Zeus, leader of the host, I have come if perchance thou mayest tell me some tidings of my father. My dwelling is being devoured and my fat lands are ruined, and of unfriendly men my house is full,—who slaughter continually my throngings flocks, and my kine with trailing feet and shambling gait,—none other than the wooers of my mother, despiteful out of measure. So now am I come

hither to thy knees, if haply thou art willing to tell me of his pitiful death as one that saw it perchance with thine own eyes, or heard the story from some other wanderer. And speak me no soft words in pity, but tell me plainly how thou didst get sight of him."

Then in heavy displeasure spake to him Menelaus of the fair hair: "Out upon them, for truly in the bed of a brave-hearted man were they minded to lie, very cravens as they are! Even as when a hind hath couched her new-born fawns unweaned in a strong lion's lair, and searcheth out the mountain-knees and grassy hollows, seeking pasture, and afterward the lion cometh back to his bed, and sendeth forth unsightly death upon that pair, even so shall Odysseus send forth unsightly death upon the wooers. But for that whereof thou askest and entreatest me, be sure I will not swerve from the truth in aught that I say, nor deceive thee; but of all that the ancient one of the sea, whose speech is sooth,[1] declared to me, not a word will I hide or keep from thee.

"In the river Ægyptus,[2] though eager I was to press onward home, the gods they stayed me, for that I had not offered them the acceptable sacrifice of hecatombs, and the gods ever desired that men should be mindful of their commandments. Now there is an island in the wash of the waves over against Ægyptus, and men

[1] [Truth, prophecy.]
[2] [The only name for the Nile in Homer.]

call it Pharos, within one day's voyage of a hollow ship, when shrill winds blow fair in her wake. And therein is a good haven, whence men launch the gallant ships into the deep when they have drawn a store of deep black water. There the gods held me twenty days, nor did the sea winds ever show their breath, they that serve to waft ships over the broad back of the sea. And now would all our corn have been spent, and likewise the strength of the men, except some goddess had taken pity on me and saved me, Eidothëe, daughter of mighty Proteus, the ancient one of the sea. For most of all I moved her heart, when she met me wandering alone apart from my company, who were ever roaming round the isle, fishing with bent hooks, for hunger was gnawing at their belly. So she stood by, and spake and uttered her voice, saying:

"'Art thou so very foolish, stranger, and feeble-witted, or art thou wilfully remiss, and hast pleasure in suffering? So long time art thou holden in the isle and canst find no issue therefrom, while the heart of thy company faileth within them.'

"Even so she spake, and I answered her saying: 'I will speak forth, what goddess soever thou art, and tell thee that in no wise am I holden here by mine own will, but it needs must be that I have sinned against the deathless gods, who keep the wide heaven. Howbeit, do thou tell me—for the gods know all things—which

of the immortals it is that binds me here and hath hindered me from my way, and declare as touching my returning how I may go over the teeming deep.'

"So I spake, and straightway the fair goddess made answer: 'Yea now, sir, I will plainly tell thee all. Hither resorteth that ancient one of the sea, whose speech is sooth, the deathless Ægyptian Proteus, who knows the depths of every sea, and is the thrall of Poseidon, and who, they say, is my father. If thou couldst but lay an ambush and catch him, he will surely declare to thee the way and the measure of thy path, and will tell thee of thy returning, how thou mayest go over the teeming deep. Yea, and he will show thee, O fosterling of Zeus, if thou wilt, what good thing and what evil hath been wrought in thy halls, whilst thou hast been faring this long and grievous way.'

"So she spake, but I answered and said unto her: 'Devise now thyself the ambush to take this ancient one divine, lest by any chance he see me first, or know of my coming, and avoid me. For a god is hard for mortal man to quell.'

"So spake I, and straightway the fair goddess made answer: 'Yea now, sir, I will plainly tell thee all. So often as the sun in his course hath reached the mid heaven, then forth from the brine comes the ancient one of the sea, whose speech is sooth, before the breath of the West Wind he comes, and the sea's dark ripple

covers him. And when he is got forth, he lies down to sleep in the hollow of the caves. And around him the seals, the brood of the fair daughter of the brine, sleep all in a flock, stolen forth from the grey sea water, and bitter is the scent they breathe of the deeps of the salt sea. There will I lead thee at the breaking of the day, and couch you all orderly; so do thou choose diligently three of thy company, the best thou hast in thy decked ships. And I will tell thee all the magic arts of that old man. First, he will number the seals and go over them; but when he has told their tale and beheld them, he will lay him down in the midst, as a shepherd mid the sheep of his flock. So soon as ever ye shall see him couched, even then mind you of your might and strength, and hold him there, despite his eagerness and striving to be free. And he will make assay, and take all manner of shapes of things that creep upon the earth, of water likewise, and of fierce fire burning. But do ye grasp him steadfastly and press him yet the more, and at length when he questions thee in his proper shape, as he was when first ye saw him laid to rest, then, hero, hold thy strong hands, and let the ancient one go free, and ask him which of the gods is hard upon thee, and as touching thy returning, how thou mayest go over the teeming deep.'

"Therewith she dived beneath the heaving sea, but I betook me to the ships where they stood in the sand,

and my heart was darkly troubled as I went. But after I had come down to the ship and to the sea, and we had made ready our supper and immortal night had come on, then did we lay us to rest upon the sea-beach. So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, in that hour I walked by the shore of the wide-wayed sea, praying instantly to the gods; and I took with me three of my company, in whom I trusted most for every enterprise.

"Meanwhile, so it was that she had plunged into the broad bosom of the sea, and had brought from the deep the skins of four sea-calves, and all were newly flayed, for she was minded to lay a snare for her father. She scooped lairs on the sea-sand, and sat awaiting us, and we drew very nigh her, and she made us all lie down in order, and cast a skin over each. There would our ambush have been most terrible, for the deadly stench of the sea-bred seals distressed us sore: nay, who would lay him down by a beast of the sea? But herself she wrought deliverance, and devised a great comfort. She took ambrosia of a very sweet savour, and set it beneath each man's nostril, and did away with the stench of the beast. So all the morning we waited with steadfast heart, and the seals came forth in troops from the brine, and then they couched them all orderly by the sea-beach. And at high day the ancient one came forth from out of the brine, and found his fatted seals, yea

and he went along their line and told their tale; and first among the sea-beasts he reckoned us, and guessed not that there was guile, and afterward he too laid him down. Then we rushed upon him with a cry, and cast our hands about him, nor did that ancient one forget his cunning. Now behold, at the first he turned into a bearded lion, and thereafter into a snake, and a pard, and a huge boar; then he took the shape of running water, and of a tall and flowering tree. We the while held him close with steadfast heart. But when now that ancient one of the magic arts was aweary, then at last he questioned me and spake unto me, saying:

"'Which of the gods was it, son of Atreus, that aided thee with his counsel, that thou mightest waylay and take me perforce? What wouldest thou thereby?'

"Even so he spake, but I answered him saying: 'Old man, thou knowest all, wherefore dost thou question me thereof with crooked words? For lo, I am holden long time in this isle, neither can I find any issue therefrom and my heart faileth within me. Howbeit do thou tell me—for the gods know all things—which of the immortals it is that bindeth me here, and hath hindered me from my way; and declare as touching my returning, how I may go over the teeming deep.'

"Even so I spake, and he straightway answered me saying: 'Nay, surely thou shouldest have done goodly sacrifice to Zeus and the other gods ere thine embark-

ing, that with most speed thou mightest reach thy country, sailing over the wine-dark deep. For it is not thy fate to see thy friends, and come to thy stablished house and thine own country, till thou hast passed yet again within the waters of Ægyptus, the heaven-fed stream, and offered holy hecatombs to the deathless gods who keep the wide heaven. So shall the gods grant thee the path which thou desirest.'

"So spake he, but my spirit within me was broken, for that he bade me again to go to Ægyptus over the misty deep, a long and grievous way.

"Yet even so I answered him saying: 'Old man, all this will I do, according to thy word. But come, declare me this and tell it all plainly. Did all those Achæans return safe with their ships, all whom Nestor and I left as we went from Troy, or perished any by a shameful death aboard his own ship, or in the arms of his friends?'

"So spake I, and anon he answered me saying: 'Son of Atreus, why dost thou straitly question me hereof? Nay, it is not for thy good to know or learn my thought; for I tell thee thou shalt not long be tearless, when thou hast heard it all aright. For many of these were taken, and many were left; but two only of the leaders of the mail-coated Achæans perished in returning. And one methinks is yet alive, and is holden on the wide deep. Aias in truth was smitten in the midst of

his ships of the long oars. And Ægisthus slew thy brother Agamemnon.'

"So spake he, and my spirit within me was broken, and I wept as I sat upon the sand, nor was I minded any more to live and to see the light of the sun. But when I had taken my fill of weeping and grovelling on the ground, then spake the ancient one of the sea, whose speech is sooth:

" 'No more, son of Atreus, hold this long weeping without cease, for we shall find no help therein. Rather with all haste make essay that so thou mayest come to thine own country. For either thou shalt find Ægisthus yet alive, or it may be Orestes was beforehand with thee and slew him; so mayest thou chance upon his funeral feast.'

"So he spake, and my heart and lordly soul again were comforted for all my sorrow, and I uttered my voice and I spake to him winged words:

" 'Their fate I now know; but tell me of the third; who is it that is yet living and holden on the wide deep, or perchance is dead? and fain would I hear despite my sorrow.'

"So spake I, and straightway he answered, and said: 'It is the son of Laertes, whose dwelling is in Ithaca; and I saw him in an island shedding big tears in the halls of the nymph Calypso, who holds him there perforce: so he may not come to his own country, for he

has by him no ships with oars, and no companions to send him on his way over the broad back of the sea.'

"But lo, now tarry in my halls till it shall be the eleventh day hence or the twelfth. Then will I send thee with all honour on thy way, and give thee splendid gifts, three horses and a polished car; and moreover I will give thee a goodly chalice, that thou mayest pour forth before the deathless gods, and be mindful of me all the days of thy life."

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: "Son of Atreus, nay, hold me not long time here. Yea even for a year would I be content to sit by thee, and no desire for home or parents would come upon me; for I take wondrous pleasure in thy tales and talk. But already my company wearieth in fair Pylos, and yet thou art keeping me long time here. And whatsoever gift thou wouldest give me, let it be a thing to treasure; but horses I will take none to Ithaca, but leave them here to grace thine own house, for thou art lord of a wide plain wherein is lotus great plenty, and therein is spear-reed and wheat and rye, and white and spreading barley. In Ithaca there are no wide courses, nor meadow land at all. It is a pasture land of goats, and more pleasant in my sight than one that pastureth horses; for of the isles that lie and lean upon the sea, none are fit for the driving of horses, or rich in meadow land, and least of all is Ithaca."

But the wooers meantime were before the palace of Odysseus, taking their pleasure in casting of weights and spears, on a levelled place, as heretofore, in their insolence. And Antinoüs and god-like Eurymachus were seated there, the chief men of the wooers, who were far the most excellent of all. And Nœmon, son of Phromius, drew nigh to them and spake unto Antinoüs and questioned him, saying:

"Antinoüs, know we at all, or know we not, when Telemachus will return from sandy Pylos? He hath departed with a ship of mine, and I have need thereof, to cross over into spacious Elis, where I have twelve brood mares with hardy mules unbroken at the teat; I would drive off one of these and break him in."

So spake he, and they were amazed, for they deemed not that Telemachus had gone to Pylos, but that he was at home somewhere in the fields, whether among the flocks, or with the swineherd.

Then Antinoüs, son of Eupeithes, spake to him in turn: "Tell me the plain truth; when did he go, and what noble youths went with him? Were they chosen men of Ithaca or hirelings and thralls of his own? He was in case to bring even that about. And tell me this in good sooth, that I may know for a surety: Did he take thy black ship from thee perforce against thy will? Or didst thou give it him of free will at his entreaty?"

Then Nœmon, son of Phromius, answered him say-

ing: "I gave it him myself of free will. What can any man do, when such an one, so bestead with care, begs a favour? It were hard to deny the gift. The youths who next to us are noblest in the land, even these have gone with him; and I marked their leader on board ship, Mentor, or a god who in all things resembled Mentor. But one matter I marvel at: I saw the goodly Mentor here yesterday toward dawn, though already he had embarked for Pylos."

He spake and withal departed to his father's house. And the proud spirits of these twain were angered, and they made the wooers sit down together and cease from their games. And among them spake Antinoüs, son of Eupeithes, in displeasure; and his black heart was wholly filled with rage, and his eyes were like flaming fire:

"Out on him, a proud deed hath Telemachus accomplished with a high hand, even this journey, and we thought that he would never bring it to pass! This lad hath clean gone without more ado, in spite of us all; his ship he hath let haul to the sea, and chosen the noblest in the township. He will begin to be our bane even more than heretofore; but may Zeus destroy his might, not ours, ere he reach the measure of manhood! But come, give me a swift ship and twenty men, that I may lie in watch and wait even for him on his way home, in the straight between Ithaca and rugged Samos, that so

he may have a woeful end of his cruising in quest of his father."

So spake he, and they all assented thereto, and bade him to the work. And thereupon they arose and went to the house of Odysseus.

Now it was no long time before Penelope heard of the counsel that the wooers had devised in the deep of their heart. For the henchman Medon told her thereof, who stood without the court and heard their purposes, while they were weaving their plot within. So he went on his way through the halls to bring the news to Penelope; and as he stept down over the threshold, Penelope spake unto him:

"Henchman, wherefore have the noble wooers sent thee forth? Was it to tell the handmaids of divine Odysseus to cease from their work, and prepare a banquet for them? Nay, after this much wooing, never again may they come together, but here this day sup for their last and latest time; all ye who assemble so often, and waste much livelihood, the wealth of wise Telemachus!"

Then Medon, wise of heart, answered her: "Would, O queen, that this were the crowning evil! But the wooers devise another far greater and more grievous, which I pray the son of Cronos may never fulfill! They are set on slaying Telemachus with the edge of the sword on his homeward way; for he is gone to

fair Pylos and goodly Lacedæmon to seek tidings of his father."

So spake he, but her knees were loosened where she stood, and her heart melted within her, and long time was she speechless, and lo, her eyes were filled with tears and the voice of her utterance was stayed. And at the last she answered him and said:

"Henchman, wherefore I pray thee is my son departed? There is no need that he should go abroad on swift ships, that serve men for horses on the sea, and that cross the great wet waste. Is it that even his own name may no more be left upon earth?"

Then Medon, wise of heart, answered her: "I know not whether some god set him on, or whether his own spirit stirred him to go to Pylos to seek tidings of his father's return, or to hear what end he met."

He spake, and departed through the house of Odysseus, and on her fell a cloud of consuming grief; so that she might no more endure to seat her on a chair, whereof there were many in the house, but there she crouched on the threshold of her well-builded chamber, wailing piteously, and her handmaids round her made low moan, as many as were in the house with her, young and old. And Penelope spake among them pouring forth her lamentation:

"Hear me, my friends, for the Olympian sire hath given me pain exceedingly beyond all women who were

born and bred in my day. For erewhile I lost my noble lord of the lion heart, adorned with all perfection among the Danaäns, my good lord, whose fame is noised abroad from Hellas to mid Argos. And now again the storm-winds have snatched away my well-beloved son without tidings from our halls, nor heard I of his departure. Oh, women, hard of heart, that even ye did not each one let the thought come into your minds, to rouse me from my couch when he went to the black hollow ship, though ye knew full well thereof! For had I heard that he was purposing this journey, verily he should have stayed here still, though eager to be gone, or have left me dead in the halls."

Then the good nurse Eurycleia answered her: "Dear lady, aye, slay me if thou wilt with the pitiless sword or let me live on in the house,—yet will I not hide my saying from thee. I knew all this, and gave him whatsoever he commanded, bread and sweet wine. And he took a great oath of me not to tell thee till at least the twelfth day should come, or thou thyself shouldst miss him and hear of his departure, that thou mightest not mar thy fair flesh with thy tears. But now, wash thee in water, and take to thee clean raiment and ascend to thy upper chamber with the women thy handmaids, and pray to Athene, daughter of Zeus. For so may she save him even from death."

So spake she, and lulled her queen's lamentation, and

made her eyes to cease from weeping. So she washed her in water, and took to her clean raiment, and ascended to the upper chamber with the women her handmaids, and placed the meal for sprinkling in a basket, and prayed unto Athene:

"Hear me, child of Zeus, lord of the ægis, unwearied maiden! If ever wise Odysseus in his halls burnt for thee fat slices of the thighs of heifer or of sheep, these things, I pray thee, now remember, and save my dear son, and ward from him the wooers in the naughtiness of their pride."

Now the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, turned to other thoughts. She made a phantom, and fashioned it after the likeness of a woman, Iphthime, daughter of great-hearted Icarius, whose dwelling was in Pheræ. And she sent it to the house of divine Odysseus to bid Penelope, amid her sorrow and lamenting, to cease from her weeping and tearful lamentation. So the phantom passed into the chamber by the thong of the bolt, and stood above her head and spake unto her, saying:

"Sleepest thou, Penelope, stricken at heart? Nay, even the gods who live at ease suffer thee not to wail or be afflicted, seeing that thy son is yet to return; for no sinner is he in the eyes of the gods."

Then wise Penelope made her answer as she slumbered very softly at the gates of dreams:

"Wherefore, sister, hast thou come hither, that be-

fore wert not wont to come, for thou hast thine habitation very far away? Biddest thou me indeed to cease from the sorrows and pains, so many that disquiet my heart and soul? Erewhile I lost my noble lord of the lion heart, whose fame is noised abroad from Hellas to mid Argos. And now, again, my well-beloved son is departed on his hollow ship, poor child, not skilled in toils or in the gatherings of men. For him I sorrow yet more than for my lord, and I tremble and fear for him lest aught befall him, whether, it may be, amid that folk where he is gone, or in the deep. For many foemen devise evil against him, and go about to kill him, or ever he come to his own country."

And the dim phantom answered her, and said: "Take courage, and be not so sorely afraid. For lo, such a friend goes to guide him, as all men pray to stand by them, for that she hath the power, even Pallas Athene. And she pitieth thee in thy sorrow, and now hath sent me forth to speak these words to thee."

And wise Penelope answered her, saying: "If thou art indeed a god, and hast heard the word of a god, come, I pray thee, and tell me tidings concerning that ill-fated man, whether perchance he is yet alive and sees the light of the sun, or hath already died, and is a dweller in the house of Hades."

And the dim phantom answered her and said: "Concerning him I will not tell thee all the tale,

whether he be alive or dead; it is ill to speak words light as wind."

Therewith the phantom slipped away by the bolt of the door and passed into the breath of the wind. And the daughter of Icarius started up from sleep, and her heart was cheered, so clear was the vision that sped toward her in the dead of the night.

Meanwhile the wooers had taken ship and were sailing over the wet ways, pondering in their hearts sheer death for Telemachus. Now there is a rocky isle in the mid sea, midway between Ithaca and rugged Samos, Asteris, a little isle; and there is a harbour therein with a double entrance where ships may ride. There the Achæans abode lying in wait for Telemachus.

BOOK V

The gods in council command Calypso by Hermes to send away Odysseus on a raft of trees; and Poseidon, returning from Ethiopia and seeing him on the coast of Phæacia, scattered his raft; and how by the help of Ino he was thrown ashore, and slept on a heap of dry leaves till the next day.

Now the Dawn arose from her couch, from the side of the lordly Tithonus, to bear light to the immortals and to mortal men. And lo, the gods were gathering

to session, and among them Zeus, that thunders on high, whose might is above all. And Athene told them the tale of the many woes of Odysseus, recalling them to mind; for near her heart was he that then abode in the dwelling of the nymph:

"Father Zeus, and all ye other blessed gods that live forever, henceforth let not any sceptred king be kind and gentle with all his heart, nor minded to do righteously, but let him always be a hard man and work unrighteousness, for behold, there is none of the people whose lord he was that remembereth divine Odysseus, who was gentle as a father. Now he lieth in an island, suffering strong pains, in the halls of the nymph Calypso, who holdeth him perforce; so he may not reach his own country, for he hath no ships with oars, and no companions to send him on his way over the broad back of the sea. And now, again, they are set on slaying his beloved son on his homeward way, for he is gone to fair Pylos and to goodly Lacedæmon, to seek tidings of his father."

And Zeus, gatherer of the clouds, answered and spake unto her: "My child, what word hath escaped the door of thy lips? Didst thou thyself plan this device, that Odysseus may assuredly take vengeance on those men at his coming? As for Telemachus, do thou guide him by thine art, as well thou mayst, that so he may come to his own country all unharmed, and

the wooers may return in their ship with their labour all in vain."

Therewith he spake to Hermes, his dear son: "Hermes, forasmuch as thou art our herald, tell unto the nymph of the braided tresses my unerring counsel, even the return of the patient Odysseus, how he is to come to his home, with no furtherance of gods or of mortal men. He shall sail on a well-bound raft, in sore distress, and on the twentieth day arrive at fertile Scheria, even at the land of the Phæacians, who are near of kin to the gods. And they shall give him all worship heartily as to a god, and send him on his way in a ship to his own dear country, with gifts of bronze and gold, and raiment in plenty, such as never would Odysseus have won for himself out of Troy, yea, though he had returned unhurt with the share of the spoil that fell to him. On such wise is he fated to see his friends, and come to his high-roofed home and his own country."

So spake he, nor heedless was the messenger. Straightway he bound beneath his feet his lovely golden sandals, that wax not old, that bare him alike over the wet sea and over the limitless land, swift as the breath of the wind. And he took the wand wherewith he lulls the eyes of whomso he will, while others again he even wakes from out of sleep. With this rod in his hand flew the strong slayer of Argos. Above Pieria he passed

and leapt from the upper air into the deep. Then he sped along the wave like the cormorant, that chaseth the fishes through the perilous gulfs of the unharvested sea, and wetteth his thick plumage in the brine. Such like did Hermes ride upon the press of the waves. But when he had now reached that far-off isle, he went forth from the sea of the violet blue to get him up into the land, till he came to a great cave, wherein dwelt the nymph of the braided tresses: and he found her within. And on the hearth there was a great fire burning, and from afar through the isle was smelt the fragrance of cleft cedar blazing, and of sandalwood. And the nymph within was singing with a sweet voice as she fared to and fro before the loom, and wove with a shuttle of gold. And round about the cave there was a wood blossoming, alder and poplar and sweet-smelling cypress. And therein roosted birds long of wing, owls and falcons and chattering sea-crows, which have their business in the waters. And lo, there about the hollow cave trailed a gadding garden vine, all rich with clusters. And fountains four set orderly were running with clear water, hard by one another, turned each to his own course. And all around soft meadows bloomed of violets and parsley, yea, even a deathless god who came thither might wonder at the sight and be glad at heart. There the messenger, the slayer of Argos, stood and wondered. Now when he had gazed

at all with wonder, anon he went into the wide cave; nor did Calypso, that fair goddess, fail to know him, when she saw him face to face; for the gods use not to be strange one to another, the immortals, not though one have his habitation far away. But he found not Odysseus, the great-hearted, within the cave, who sat weeping on the shore even as aforetime, straining his soul with tears and groans and griefs, and as he wept he looked wistfully over the unharvested deep. And Calypso, that fair goddess, questioned Hermes, when she had made him sit on a bright shining seat:

"Wherefore, I pray thee, Hermes, of the golden wand, hast thou come hither, worshipful and welcome, whereas as of old thou wert not wont to visit me? Tell me all thy thought; my heart is set on fulfilling it, if fulfil it I may, and if it hath been fulfilled in the counsel of fate. But now follow me further, that I may set before thee the entertainment of strangers."

Therewith the goddess spread a table with ambrosia and set it by him, and mixed the ruddy nectar. So the messenger, the slayer of Argos, did eat and drink. Now after he had supped and comforted his soul with food, at the last he answered, and spake to her on this wise:

"Thou makest question of me on my coming, a goddess of a god, and I will tell thee this my saying truly, at thy command. 'Twas Zeus that bade me

come hither, by no will of mine; nay, who of his free will would speed over such a wondrous space of brine, whereby is no city of mortals that do sacrifice to the gods, and offer choice hecatombs? He saith that thou hast with thee a man most wretched beyond his fellows, beyond those men that round the burg of Priam for nine years fought, and in the tenth year sacked the city and departed homeward. Yet on the way they sinned against Athene, and she raised upon them an evil blast and long waves of the sea. Then all the rest of his good company was lost, but it came to pass that the wind bare and the wave brought him hither. And now Zeus biddeth thee send him hence with what speed thou mayest, for it is not ordained that he die away from his friends, but rather it is his fate to look on them even yet, and to come to his high-roofed home and his own country."

So spake he, and Calypso, that fair goddess, shuddered and uttered her voice, and spake unto him winged words: "Hard are ye gods and jealous exceeding, who grudge that a mortal man should dwell with me. Him I saved as he went all alone bestriding the keel of a bark, for Zeus had cleft his swift ship with a white bolt in the midst of the wine-dark deep. There all the rest of his good company was lost, but it came to pass that the wind bare and the wave brought him hither. And him have I loved and cherished, and

I said that I would make him to know not death and age for ever. Yet forasmuch as it is in no wise possible for another god to go beyond, or make void the purpose of Zeus, lord of the ægis, let him away over the unharvested seas, if the summons and the bidding be of Zeus. But I will give him no despatch, not I, for I have no ships by me with oars, nor company to bear him on his way over the broad back of the sea. Yet will I be forward to put this in his mind, and will hide nought, that all unharmed he may come to his own country."

Then the messenger, the slayer of Argos, answered her: "Yea, speed him now upon his path and have regard unto the wrath of Zeus, lest haply he be angered and bear hard on thee hereafter."

Therewith the great slayer of Argos departed, but the nymph went on her way to the great-hearted Odysseus, when she had heard the message of Zeus. And there she found him sitting on the shore, and his eyes were never dry of tears, and his sweet life was ebbing away as he mourned for his return; for the nymph no more found favour in his sight. So standing near him that fair goddess spake to him:

"Hapless man, sorrow no more I pray thee in this isle, nor let thy good life waste away, for even now will I send thee hence with all my heart. Nay, arise and cut long beams, and fashion a wide raft with the

axe, and lay deckings high thereupon, that it may bear thee over the misty deep. And I will place therein bread and water, and red wine to thy heart's desire, to keep hunger far away. And I will put raiment upon thee, and send a fair gale in thy wake, that so thou mayest come all unharmed to thine own country, if indeed it be the good pleasure of the gods who hold wide heaven, who are stronger than I am both to will and to do."

So she spake, and the steadfast goodly Odysseus shuddered, and uttering his voice spake to her winged words: "Herein, goddess, thou hast plainly some other thought, and in no wise my furtherance, for that thou biddest me to cross in a raft the great gulf of the sea so dread and difficult, which not even the swift gallant ships pass over rejoicing in the breeze of Zeus. Nor would I go aboard a raft to displeasure thee, unless thou wilt deign, O goddess, to swear a great oath not to plan any hidden guile to mine own hurt."

So spake he, and Calypso, the fair goddess, smiled and caressed him with her hand, and spake and hailed him:

"Let earth be now witness hereto, and the wide heaven above, and that falling water of the Styx, the greatest oath and the most terrible to the blessed gods, that I will not plan any hidden guile to thine own hurt. Nay, but my thoughts are such, and such will be my counsel, as I would devise for myself, if ever so sore a

need came over me. For I too have a righteous mind, and my heart within me is not of iron, but pitiful even as thine."

Therewith the fair goddess led the way quickly, and he followed hard in the steps of the goddess. And they reached the hollow cave, the goddess and the man; so he sat him down upon the chair whence Hermes had arisen, and the nymph placed by him all manner of food to eat and drink, such as is meat for men. As for her she sat over against divine Odysseus, and the handmaids placed by her ambrosia and nectar. So they put forth their hands upon the good cheer set before them. But after they had taken their fill of meat and drink, Calypso, the fair goddess, spake first and said:

"Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, so it is indeed thy wish to get thee home to thine own dear country even in this hour? Good fortune go with thee even so! Yet didst thou know in thine heart what a measure of suffering thou art ordained to fulfill, or ever thou reach thine own country, here, even here, thou wouldst abide with me and keep this house, and wouldst never taste of death, though thou longest to see thy wife, for whom thou hast ever a desire day by day. Not in sooth that I avow me to be less noble than she in form or fashion, for it is no wise meet that mortal women should match them with immortals, in shape and comeliness."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered, and spake unto her: "Be not wroth with me hereat, goddess and queen. Myself I know it well, how wise Penelope is meaner to look upon than thou, in comeliness and stature. But she is mortal and thou knowest not age nor death. Yet even so, I wish and long day by day to fare homeward and see the day of my returning. Yea, and if some god shall wreck me in the wine-dark deep, even so I will endure, with a heart within me patient of affliction. For already have I suffered full much, and much have I toiled in perils of waves and war; let this be added to the tale of those."

So spake he, and the sun sank and darkness came on.

So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, anon Odysseus put on him a mantle and doublet, and the nymph clad her in a great shining robe, light of woof and gracious, and about her waist she cast a fair golden girdle, and a veil withal upon her head. Then she considered of the sending of Odysseus, the great-hearted. She gave him a great axe, fitted to his grasp, an axe of bronze double-edged, and with a goodly handle of olive wood fastened well. Next she gave him a polished adze, and she led the way to the border of the isle where tall trees grew, alder and poplar, and pine that reacheth unto heaven, seasoned long since and sere, that might lightly float for him. Now after she had shown him where the tall trees grew, Calypso,

the fair goddess, departed homeward. And he set to cutting timber, and his work went busily. Twenty trees in all he felled, and then trimmed them with the axe of bronze, and deftly smoothed them, and over them made straight the line. Meanwhile Calypso, the fair goddess, brought him augers, so he bored each piece and jointed them together, and then made all fast with trenails and dowels. Wide as is the floor of a broad ship of burden, which some man well skilled in carpentry may trace him out, of such beam did Odysseus fashion his broad raft. And thereat he wrought, and set up the deckings, fitting them to the close-set uprights, and finished them off with long gunwales, and therein he set a mast, and a yard-arm fitted thereto, and moreover he made him a rudder to guide the craft. And he fenced it with wattled osier withies from stem to stern, to be a bulwark against the wave, and piled up wood to back them. Meanwhile Calypso, the fair goddess, brought him web of cloth to make him sails; and these too he fashioned very skilfully. And he made fast therein braces and halyards and sheets, and at last he pushed the raft with levers down to the fair salt sea.

It was the fourth day when he had accomplished all. And, lo, on the fifth, the fair Calypso sent him on his way from the island, when she had bathed him and clad him in fragrant attire. Moreover, the goddess

placed on board the ship two skins, one of dark wine, and another, a great one, of water, and corn too in a wallet, and she set thereon a store of dainties to his heart's desire, and sent forth a warm and gentle wind to blow. And goodly Odysseus rejoiced as he set his sails to the breeze. So he sate and cunningly guided the craft with the helm, nor did sleep fall upon his eyelids, as he viewed the Pleiads and Bootes, that setteth late, and the Bear, which they likewise call the Wain, which turneth ever in one place, and keepeth watch upon Orion, and alone hath no part in the baths of Ocean. This star, Calypso, the fair goddess, bade him to keep ever on the left as he traversed the deep. Ten days and seven he sailed traversing the deep, and on the eighteenth day appeared the shadowy hills of the land of the Phæacians, at the point where it lay nearest to him; and it showed like a shield in the misty deep.

Now the lord, the shaker of the earth, on his way from the Ethiopians espied him afar off from the mountains of the Solymi; even thence he saw Odysseus as he sailed over the deep; and he was yet more angered in spirit, and shaking his head he communed with his own heart. "Lo now, it must be that the gods at the last have changed their purpose concerning Odysseus, while I was away among the Ethiopians. And now he is nigh to the Phæacian land, where it is

ordained that he escape the great issues of the woe which hath come upon him. But methinks that even yet I will drive him far enough in the path of suffering."

With that he gathered the clouds and troubled the waters of the deep, grasping his trident in his hands; and he aroused all storms of all manner of winds, and shrouded in clouds the land and sea: and down sped night from heaven. The East Wind and the South Wind clashed, and the stormy West, and the North, that is born in the bright air, rolling onward a great wave. Then were the knees of Odysseus loosened and his heart melted, and heavily he spake to his own great spirit:

"Oh, wretched man that I am! what is to befall me at the last? I fear that indeed the goddess spake all things truly, who said that I should fill up the measure of sorrow on the deep, or ever I came to mine own country; and lo, all these things have an end. In such wise doth Zeus crown the wide heaven with clouds, and hath troubled the deep, and the blasts rush on of all the winds; yea, now is utter doom assured me. Thrice blessed those Danaäns, yea, four times blessed, who perished on a time in wide Troy-land, doing a pleasure to the sons of Atreus! Would to God that I too had died, and met my fate on that day when the press of Trojans cast their bronze-shod

spears upon me, fighting for the body of the son of Peleus! So should I have gotten my dues of burial, and the Achæans would have spread my fame; but now it is my fate to be overtaken by a pitiful death."

Even as he spake, the great wave smote down upon him, driving on in terrible wise, that the raft reeled again. And far therefrom he fell, and lost the helm from his hand; and the fierce blast of the jostling winds came and brake his mast in the midst, and sail and yard-arm fell afar into the deep. Long time the water kept him under, nor could he speedily rise from beneath the rush of the mighty wave: for the garments hung heavy which fair Calypso gave him. But late and at length he came up, and spat forth from his mouth the bitter salt water, which ran down in streams from his head. Yet even so forgat he not his raft, for all his wretched plight, but made a spring after it in the waves, and clutched it to him, and sat in the midst thereof, avoiding the issues of death; and the great wave swept it hither and thither along the stream. And as the North Wind in the harvest tide sweeps the thistle-down along the plain, and close the tufts cling each to other, even so the winds bare the raft hither and thither along the main. Now the South would toss it to the North to carry, and now again the East would yield it to the West to chase.

But the daughter of Cadmus marked him, Ino of the

fair ankles, Leucothea, who in time past was a maiden of mortal speech, but now in the depths of the salt sea she had gotten her share of worship from the gods. She took pity on Odysseus in his wandering and travail, and she rose, like a sea-gull on the wing, from the depth of the mere, and sat upon the well-bound raft and spake saying:

"Hapless one, wherefore was Poseidon, shaker of the earth, so wondrous wroth with thee, seeing that he soweth for thee the seeds of many evils? Yet shall he not make a full end of thee, for all his desire. But do even as I tell thee, and methinks thou art not witless. Cast off these garments, and leave the raft to drift before the winds, but do thou swim with thine hands and strive to win a footing on the coast of the Phæacians, where it is decreed that thou escape. Here, take this veil imperishable and wind it about thy breast; so is there no fear that thou suffer aught or perish. But when thou hast laid hold of the mainland with thy hands, loose it from off thee and cast it into the wine-dark deep far from the land, and thyself turn away."

With that the goddess gave the veil, and for her part dived back into the heaving deep, like a sea-gull: and the dark wave closed over her. But the steadfast goodly Odysseus pondered, and heavily he spake to his own brave spirit:

"Ah, woe is me! Can it be that some one of the immortals is weaving a new snare for me, that she bids me quit my raft? Nay verily, I will not yet obey, for I had sight of the shore yet a long way off, where she told me that I might escape. I am resolved what I will do;—and methinks on this wise it is best. So long as the timbers abide in the dowels, so long will I endure steadfast in affliction, but so soon as the wave hath shattered my raft asunder, I will swim, for meanwhile no better counsel may be."

While yet he pondered these things in his heart and soul, Poseidon, shaker of the earth, stirred against him a great wave, terrible and grievous, and vaulted from the crest, and therewith smote him. And as when a great tempestous wind tosseth a heap of parched husks, and scatters them this way and that, even so did the wave scatter the long beams of the raft. But Odysseus bestrode a single beam, as one rideth on a courser, and stript him of the garments which fair Calypso gave him. And presently he wound the veil beneath his breast, and fell prone into the sea, outstretching his hands as one eager to swim. And the lord, the shaker of the earth, saw him and shook his head, and communed with his own soul. "Even so, after all thy sufferings, go wandering over the deep, till thou shalt come among a people, the fosterlings of Zeus. Yet for all that I deem not that thou shalt

think thyself too lightly afflicted." Therewith he lashed his steeds of the flowing manes, and came to Ægæ, where is his lordly home.

But Athene, daughter of Zeus, turned to new thoughts. Behold, she bound up the courses of the other winds, and charged them all to cease and be still; but she roused the swift North and brake the waves before him, that so Odysseus, of the seed of Zeus, might mingle with the Phæacians, lovers of the oar, avoiding death and the fates.

So for two nights and two days he was wandering in the swell of the sea, and much his heart boded of death. But when at last the fair-tressed Dawn brought the full light of the third day, thereafter the breeze fell, and lo, there was a breathless calm, and with a quick glance ahead, (he being upborne on a great wave,) he saw the land very near. And even as when most welcome to his children is the sight of a father's life, who lies in sickness and strong pains long wasting away, some angry god assailing him; and to their delight the gods have loosed him from his trouble; so welcome to Odysseus showed land and wood; and he swam onward being eager to set foot on the strand. But when he was within earshot of the shore, and heard now the thunder of the sea against the reefs— for the great wave crashed against the dry land belching in terrible wise, and all was covered with

foam of the sea,—for there were no harbours for ships nor shelters, but jutting headlands and reefs and cliffs; then at last the knees of Odysseus were loosened and his heart melted, and in heaviness he spake to his own brave spirit:

"Ah me! now that beyond all hope Zeus hath given me sight of land, and withal I have cloven my way through this gulf of the sea, here there is no place to land on from out of the grey water. For without are sharp crags, and round them the wave roars surging, and sheer the smooth rock rises, and the sea is deep thereby, so that in no wise may I find firm foothold and escape my bane, for as I fain would go ashore, the great wave may haply snatch and dash me on the jagged rock—and a wretched endeavour that would be. But if I swim yet further along the coast to find, if I may, spits that take the waves aslant and havens of the sea, I fear lest the storm-winds catch me again and bear me over the teeming deep, making heavy moan; or else some god may even send forth against me a monster from out of the shore water; and many such pastureth the renown Amphitrite. For I know how wroth against me hath been the great Shaker of the Earth."

Whilst yet he pondered these things in his heart and mind a great wave bore him to the rugged shore. There would he have been stript of his skin and all

his bones been broken, but that the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, put a thought into his heart. He rushed in, and with both his hands clutched the rock, whereto he clung till the great wave went by. So he escaped that peril, but, again with backward wash it leapt on him and smote him and cast him forth into the deep. And as when the cuttlefish is dragged forth from his chamber, the many pebbles clinging to his suckers, even so was the skin stript from his strong hand against the rocks, and the great wave closed over him. There of a truth would luckless Odysseus have perished beyond that which was ordained, had not grey-eyed Athene given him sure counsel. He arose from the line of the breakers that belch upon the shore, and swam outside, ever looking landwards, to find, if he might, spits that take the waves aslant, and havens of the sea. But when he came in his swimming over against the mouth of a fair-flowing river whereby the place seemed best in his eyes, smooth of rocks and withal there was a covert from the wind, Odysseus felt the river running, and prayed to him in his heart:

"Hear me, O king, whosoever thou art; unto thee am I come, as to one to whom prayer is made, while I flee the rebukes of Poseidon from the deep. Yea, reverend even to the deathless gods is that man who comes as a wanderer, even as I now have come to thy stream and to thy knees after much travail. Nay

pity me, O king; for I avow myself thy suppliant."

So spake he, and the god straightway stayed his stream and withheld his waves, and made the water smooth before him, and brought him safely to the mouths of the river. And his knees bowed and his stout hands fell, for his heart was broken by the brine. And his flesh was all swollen and a great stream of sea water gushed up through his mouth and nostrils. So he lay without breath or speech, swooning, such terrible weariness came upon him. But when now his breath returned and his spirit came to him again, he loosed from off him the veil of the goddess, and let it fall into the salt flowing river. And the great wave bare it back down the stream, and lightly Ino caught it in her hands. Then Odysseus turned from the river, and fell back in the reeds, and kissed earth, the grain-giver, and heavily he spake unto his own brave spirit:

"Ah, woe is me! what is to betide me? what shall happen unto me at the last? If I watch in the river bed all through the careful night, I fear that the bitter frost and fresh dew may overcome me, as I breathe forth my life for faintness, for the river breeze blows cold betimes in the morning. But if I climb the hill-side up to the shady wood, and there take rest in the thickets, though perchance the cold and weariness leave hold of me, and sweet sleep may come over me, I fear lest of wild beasts I become the spoil and prey."

So as he thought thereon this seemed to him the better way. He went up to the wood, and found it nigh the water in a place of wide prospect. So he crept beneath twin bushes that grew from one stem, both olive trees, one of them wild olive. Through these the force of the wet winds blew never, neither did the bright sun light on it with his rays, nor could the rain pierce through, so close were they twined either to other; and thereunder crept Odysseus, and anon he heaped together with his hands a broad couch; for of fallen leaves there was great plenty, enough to cover two or three men in winter time, however hard the weather. And the steadfast goodly Odysseus beheld it and rejoiced, and he laid him in the midst thereof and flung over him the fallen leaves. And as when a man hath hidden away a brand in the black embers at an upland farm, one that hath no neighbours nigh, and so saveth the seed of fire, that he may not have to seek a light otherwhere, even so did Odysseus cover him with the leaves. And Athene shed sleep upon his eyes, that so it might soon release him from his weary travail, overshadowing his eyelids.

BOOK VI

Nausicaä, going to a river near that place to wash the clothes of her father, mother, and brethren, while the clothes were drying played with her maids at ball; and Odysseus coming forth is fed and clothed, and led on his way to the house of her father, King Alcinoüs.

So there he lay asleep, the steadfast goodly Odysseus, fordone with toil and drowsiness. Meanwhile Athene went to the land and the city of the Phæacians, to the house of King Alcinoüs. She betook her to the rich-wrought bower, wherein was sleeping a maiden like to the gods in form and comeliness, Nausicaä, the daughter of Alcinoüs, high of heart. Beside her on either hand of the pillars of the door were two handmaids, dowered with beauty from the Graces, and the shining doors were shut.

But the goddess, fleet as the breath of the wind, swept towards the couch of the maiden, and stood above her head, and spake to her in the semblance of the daughter of a famous seafarer, Dymas, a girl of like age with Nausicaä, who had found grace in her sight. In her shape the grey-eyed Athene spake to the princess, saying:

"Nausicaä, how hath thy mother so heedless a maiden to her daughter? Lo, thou hast shining raiment that lies by thee uncared for, and thy marriage-day is near

at hand, when thou thyself must needs go beautifully clad, and have garments to give to them who shall lead thee to the house of the bridegroom! And, behold, these are the things whence a good report goes abroad among men, wherein a father and lady mother take delight. But come, let us arise and go a-washing with the breaking of the day, and I will follow with thee to be thy mate in the toil, that without delay thou mayest get thee ready, since truly thou art not long to be a maiden. Lo, already they are wooing thee the noblest youths of all the Phæacians, among that people whence thou thyself doth draw thy lineage. So come, beseech thy noble father betimes in the morning to furnish thee with mules and a wain to carry the men's raiment, and the robes, and the shining coverlets. Yea and for thyself it is seemlier far to go thus than on foot, for the places where we must wash are a great way off the town."

So spake the grey-eyed Athene, and departed to Olympus, where, as they say, is the seat of the gods that standeth fast for ever. Not by winds is it shaken, nor ever wet with rain, nor doth the snow come nigh thereto, but most clear air is spread about it cloudless, and the white light floats over it. Therein the blessed gods are glad for all their days, and thither Athene went when she had shown forth all to the maiden.

Anon come the throned Dawn, and awakened

Nausicaä of the fair robes, who straightway marvelled on the dream, and went through the halls to tell her parents, her father dear and her mother. And she found them within, her mother sitting by the hearth with the women her handmaids, spinning yarn of sea-purple stain, but her father she met as he was going forth to the renowned kings in their council, whither the noble Phæacians called him. Standing close by her dear father she spake, saying: "Father, dear, couldst thou not lend me a high waggon with strong wheels, that I may take the goodly raiment to the river to wash, so much as I have lying soiled? Yea and it is seemly that thou thyself, when thou art with the princes in council, shouldst have fresh raiment to wear. Also there are five dear sons of thine in the halls, two married, but three are lusty bachelors, and these are always eager for new-washen garments wherein to go to the dances; for all these things have I taken thought."

This she said, because she was ashamed to speak of glad marriage to her father; but he saw all and answered, saying:

"Neither the mules nor aught else do I grudge thee, my child. Go thy ways, and the thralls shall get thee ready a high waggon with good wheels, and fitted with an upper frame."

Therewith he called to his men, and they gave ear,

and without the palace they made ready the smooth-running mule-wain, and led the mules beneath the yoke, and harnessed them under the car, while the maiden brought forth from her bower the shining raiment. This she stored in the polished car, and her mother filled a basket with all manner of food to the heart's desire, dainties too she set therein, and she poured wine into a goat-skin bottle, while Nausicaä climbed into the wain. And her mother gave her soft olive oil also in a golden cruse, that she and her maidens might anoint themselves after the bath. Then Nausicaä took the whip and the shining reins, and touched the mules to start them; then there was a clatter of hoofs, and on they strained without flagging, with their load of the raiment and the maiden. Not alone did she go, for her attendants followed with her.

Now when they were come to the beautiful stream of the river, where truly were the unfailing cisterns, and bright water welled up free from beneath, and flowed past, enough to wash the foulest garments clean, there the girls unharnessed the mules from under the chariot, and turning them loose they drove them along the banks of the eddying river to graze on the honey-sweet clover. Then they took the garments from the wain, in their hands, and bore them to the black water, and briskly trod them down in the trenches, in busy rivalry. Now when they had washed

and cleansed all the stains, they spread all out in order along the shore of the deep, even where the sea, in beating on the coast, washed the pebbles clean. Then having bathed and anointed them well with olive oil, they took their mid-day meal on the river's banks, waiting till the clothes should dry in the brightness of the sun. Anon, when they were satisfied with food, the maidens and the princess, they fell to playing at ball.

But when now she was about going homewards, after yoking the mules and folding up the goodly raiment, then grey-eyed Athene turned to other thoughts, that so Odysseus might awake, and see the lovely maiden, who should be his guide to the city of the Phæacian men. So then the princess threw the ball at one of her company; she missed the girl, and cast the ball into the deep eddying current, whereat they all raised a piercing cry. Then the goodly Odysseus awoke and sat up, pondering in his heart and spirit:

"Woe is me! to what men's land am I come now? Say, are they froward, and wild, and unjust, or are they hospitable, and of God-fearing mind? How shrill a cry of maidens rings round me, of the nymphs that hold the steep hill-tops, and the riversprings, and the grassy water meadows! It must be, methinks, that I am near men of human speech. Go to, I myself will make trial and see."

Therewith the goodly Odysseus crept out from under the coppice, having broken with his strong hand a leafy bough from the thick wood, to hold athwart his body, that it might hide his nakedness withal. And forth he sallied like a lion mountain-bred, trusting in his strength, who fares out blown and rained upon, with flaming eyes; amid the kine he goes or amid the sheep or in the track of the wild deer; yea, his belly bids him go even to the good homestead to make assay upon the flocks. Even so Odysseus was fain to draw nigh to the fair-tressed maidens, all naked as he was, such need had come upon him. But he was terrible in their eyes, being marred with the salt sea foam, and they fled cowering here and there about the jutting spits of shore. And the daughter of Alcinoüs alone stood firm, for Athene gave her courage of heart, and took all trembling from her limbs. So she halted and stood over against him, and Odysseus considered whether he should clasp the knees of the lovely maiden, and so make his prayer, or should stand as he was, apart, and beseech her with smooth words, if haply she might show him the town, and give him raiment. And as he thought within himself, it seemed better to stand apart, and beseech her with smooth words, lest the maiden should be angered with him if he touched her knees: so straightway he spake a sweet and cunning word:

"I supplicate thee, O queen, whether thou art a goddess or a mortal! If indeed thou art a goddess of them that keep the wide heaven; to Artemis, then, the daughter of great Zeus, I mainly liken thee, for beauty and stature and shapeliness. But if thou art one of the daughters of men who dwell on earth, thrice blessed are thy father and thy lady mother, and thrice blessed thy brethren. Surely their souls ever glow with gladness for thy sake, each time they see thee entering the dance, so fair a flower of maidens. But he is of heart the most blessed beyond all other who shall prevail with gifts of wooing, and lead thee to his home. Never have mine eyes beheld such an one among mortals, neither man nor woman; great awe comes upon me as I look on thee. Yesterday, on the twentieth day, I escaped from the wine-dark deep, but all that time continually the wave bare me, and the vehement winds drave, from the isle Ogygia. And now some god has cast me on this shore, that here too, methinks, some evil may betide me; for I trow not that trouble will cease; the gods ere that time will yet bring many a thing to pass. But, queen, have pity on me, for after many trials and sore to thee first of all am I come, and of the other folk, who hold this city and land, I know no man. Nay show me the town, give me an old garment to cast about me, if thou hadst, when thou camest here, any wrap for the

linen. And may the gods grant thee all thy heart's desire: a husband and a home, and a mind at one with his may they give—a good gift, for there is nothing mightier and nobler than when man and wife are of one heart and mind in a house, a grief to their foes, and to their friends great joy, but their own hearts know it best."

Then Nausicaä of the white arms answered him, and said: "Stranger, forasmuch as thou seemest no evil man nor foolish—and it is Olympian Zeus himself that giveth weal to men, to the good and to the evil, to each one as he will, and this thy lot doubtless is of him, and so thou must in any wise endure it:—and now, since thou hast come to our city and our land, thou shalt not lack raiment, nor aught else that is the due of a hapless suppliant, when he has met them who can befriend him. And I will show thee the town, and name the name of the people. The Phæacians hold this city and land, and I am the daughter of Alcinoüs, great of heart, on whom all the might and force of the Phæacians depend."

Thus she spake, and called to her maidens of the fair tresses: "Halt, my maidens, whither flee ye at the sight of a man? Ye surely do not take him for an enemy? That mortal breathes not, and never will be born, who shall come with war to the land of the Phæacians, for they are very dear to the gods. For

apart we live in the wash of the waves, the outermost of men, and no other mortals are conversant with us. Nay, but this man is some helpless one come hither in his wanderings, whom now we must kindly entreat, for all strangers and beggars are from Zeus, and a little gift is dear. So, my maidens, give the stranger meat and drink, and bathe him in the river, where withal is a shelter from the winds."

So she spake, but they had halted and called each to the other, and they brought Odysseus to the sheltered place, and made him sit down, as Nausicaä bade them, the daughter of Alcinoüs, high of heart. Beside him they laid a mantle, and a doublet for raiment, and gave him soft olive oil in the golden cruse, and bade him wash in the streams of the river. Then goodly Odysseus spake among the maidens, saying: "I pray you stand thus apart, while I myself wash the brine from my shoulders, and anoint me with olive oil, for truly oil is long a stranger to my skin. But in your sight I will not bathe, for I am ashamed to make me naked in the company of fair-tressed maidens."

Then they went apart and told all to their lady. But with the river water the goodly Odysseus washed from his skin the salt scurf that covered his back and broad shoulders, and from his head he wiped the crusted brine of the barren sea. But when he had washed his whole body, and anointed him with olive

oil, and had clad himself in the raiment that the unwedded maiden gave him, then Athene, the daughter of Zeus, made him greater and more mighty to behold, and from his head caused deep curling locks to flow, like the hyacinth flower. And as when some skillful man overlays gold upon silver, even so did Athene shed grace about his head and shoulders.

Then to the shore of the sea went Odysseus apart, and sat down, glowing in beauty and grace, and the princess marvelled at him, and spake among her fair-tressed maidens, saying:

"Listen my white-armed maidens, and I will say somewhat. Not without the will of all the gods who hold Olympus hath this man come among the godlike Phæacians. Erewhile he seemed to me uncomely, but now he is like the gods that keep the wide heaven. Would that such an one might be called my husband, dwelling here, and that it might please him here to abide! But come, my maidens, give the stranger meat and drink."

Thus she spake, and they gave ready ear and hearkened, and set beside Odysseus meat and drink, and the steadfast goodly Odysseus did eat and drink eagerly, for it was long since he had tasted food.

Now Nausicaä of the white arms had another thought. She folded the raiment and stored it in the goodly wain, and yoked the mules strong of hoof, and

herself climbed into the car. Then she called on Odysseus, and spake and hailed him: "Up now, stranger, and rouse thee to go to the city, that I may convey thee to the house of my wise father, where, I promise thee, thou shalt get knowledge of all the noblest of the Phæacians. But do thou even as I tell thee, and thou seemest a discreet man enough. So long as we are passing along the fields and farms of men, do thou fare quickly with the maidens behind the mules and the chariot, and I will lead the way. But when we set foot within the city,—whereby goes a high wall with towers, and there is a fair haven on either side of the town, and narrow is the entrance, and curved ships are drawn up on either hand of the mole, for all the folk have stations for their vessels, each man one for himself. And there is the place of assembly about the goodly temple of Poseidon, furnished with heavy stones, deep bedded in the earth. There men look to the gear of the black ships, hawsers and sails, and there they fine down the oars. For the Phæacians care not for bow nor quiver, but for masts, and oars of ships, and gallant barques, wherein rejoicing they cross the grey sea. Their ungracious speech it is that I would avoid, lest some man afterward rebuke me, and there are but too many insolent folk among the people. And some one of the baser sort might meet me and say: 'Who is this that goes with Nausicaä, this tall and

goodly stranger? Where found she him? Her husband he will be, her very own. Either she has taken in some shipwrecked wanderer of strange men,—for no men dwell near us; or some god has come in answer to her instant prayer; from heaven has he descended, and will have her to wife for evermore. Better so, if herself she has ranged abroad and found a lord from a strange land, for verily she holds in no regard the Phæacians here in this country, the many men and noble who are her wooers.' So will they speak, and this would turn my reproach. Yea, and I myself would think it blame of another maiden who did such things in despite of her friends, her father and mother being still alive, and was conversant with men before the day of open wedlock. But, stranger, heed well what I say, that as soon as may be thou mayest gain at my father's hands an escort and a safe return. Thou shalt find a fair grove of Athene, a poplar grove near the road, and a spring wells forth therein, and a meadow lies all around. There is my father's demesne, and his fruitful close, within the sound of a man's shout from the city. Sit thee down there and wait until such time as we may have come into the city, and reached the house of my father. But when thou deemest that we are got to the palace, then go up to the city of the Phæacians, and ask for the house of my father Alcinoüs, high of heart. It is easily known,

and a young child will be thy guide, for nowise like it are builded the houses of the Phæacians, so goodly is the palace of the hero Alcinoüs. But when thou art within the shadow of the halls and the court, pass quickly through the great chamber, till thou comest to my mother, who sits at the hearth in the light of the fire, weaving yarn of sea-purple stain, a wonder to behold. Her chair is leaned against a pillar, and her maidens sit behind her. And there my father's throne leans close to hers, wherein he sits and drinks his wine, like an immortal. Pass thou by him, and cast thy hands about my mother's knees, that thou mayest see quickly and with joy the day of thy returning, even if thou art from a very far country. If but her heart be kindly disposed toward thee, then there is hope that thou shalt see thy friends, and come to thy well-builded house, and to thine own country."

She spake, and smote the mules with the shining whip, and quickly they left behind them the streams of the river. And well they trotted and well they paced, and she took heed to drive in such wise that the maidens and Odysseus might follow on foot, and cunningly she plied the lash. Then the sun set, and they came to the famous grove, the sacred place of Athene so there the goodly Odysseus sat him down. Then straightway he prayed to the daughter of mighty Zeus: "Listen to me, child of Zeus, lord of the ægis, un

wearied maiden; hear me even now, since before thou heardest not when I was smitten on the sea, when the renowned Earth-shaker smote me. Grant me to come to the Phæacians as one dear, and worthy of pity."

So he spake in prayer, and Pallas Athene heard him; but she did not yet appear to him face to face, for she had regard unto her father's brother, who furiously raged against the godlike Odysseus, till he should come to his own country.

BOOK VII

Odysseus being received at the house of the king Alcinoüs, the queen after supper, taking notice of his garments, gives him occasion to relate his passage thither on the raft. Alcinous promises him a convoy for the morrow.

So he prayed there, the steadfast goodly Odysseus, while the two strong mules bare the princess to the town. And when she had now come to the famous palace of her father, she halted at the gateway, and round her gathered her brothers, men like to the immortals, and they loosed the mules from under the car, and carried the raiment within.

At that same hour Odysseus roused him to go to the city, and Athene shed a deep mist about Odysseus for the favour that she bare him, lest any of the Phæacians

high of heart, should meet him and mock him in sharp speech, and ask him who he was. But when he was now about to enter the pleasant city, then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, met him, in the fashion of a young maiden carrying a pitcher, and she stood over against him, and goodly Odysseus inquired of her:

"My child, couldst thou not lead me to the palace of the lord Alcinoüs, who bears sway among this people? Lo, I am come here, a stranger travel-worn from afar, from a distant land; wherefore of the folk who possess this city and country I know not any man."

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, answered him saying: "Yea now, father and stranger, I will show thee the house that thou bidst me declare, for it lies near the palace of my noble father; behold, be silent as thou goest, and I will lead the way. And look on no man, nor question any. For these men do not gladly suffer strangers, nor lovingly entreat whoso cometh from a strange land. They trust to the speed of their swift ships, wherewith they cross the great gulf, for the Earth-shaker hath vouchsafed them this power. [Their ships are swift as the flight of a bird, or as a thought.]"

Therewith Pallas Athene led the way swiftly, and he followed hard in the footsteps of the goddess. And it came to pass that the Phæacians, mariners renowned, marked him not as he went down the city through their

midst, for the fair-tressed Athene suffered it not, that awful goddess, who shed a wondrous mist about him, for the favour that she bare him in her heart. And Odysseus marvelled at the havens and the gallant ships, yea and the places of assembly of the heroes, and the long high walls crowned with palisades, a marvel to behold. But when they had now come to the famous palace of the king, the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake first and said:

"Lo, here, father and stranger, is the house that thou wouldst have me show thee: and thou shalt find kings at the feast, the fosterlings of Zeus; enter then, and fear not in thine heart, for the dauntless man is the best in every adventure, even though he come from a strange land. Thou shalt find the queen first in the halls: Arete is the name whereby men call her. If but her heart be kindly disposed to thee, then is there good hope that thou mayest see thy friends, and come to thy high-roofed home and thine own country."

Therewith grey-eyed Athene departed over the unharvested seas. Meanwhile Odysseus went to the famous palace of Alcinoüs, and his heart was full of many thoughts as he stood there or ever he had reached the threshold of bronze. For there was a gleam as it were of sun or moon through the high-roofed hall of great-hearted Alcinoüs. Brazen were the walls which ran this way and that from the threshold to

the inmost chamber, and round them was a frieze of blue, and golden were the doors that closed in the house. Silver were the door-posts that were set on the brazen threshold, and silver the lintel thereupon, and the hook of the door was of gold. And on either side stood golden hounds and silver, which Hephæstus wrought by his cunning, to guard the palace of great-hearted Alcinoüs, being free from death and age all their days. And within were seats arrayed against the wall this way and that, from the threshold even to the inmost chamber, and thereon were spread light coverings finely woven, the handiwork of women. There the Phæacian chieftains were wont to sit eating and drinking, for they had continual store. Yea, and there were youths fashioned in gold, standing on firm-set bases, with flaming torches in their hands, giving light through the night to the feasters in the palace. And he had fifty handmaids in the house, and some grind the yellow grain on the millstone, and others weave webs and turn the yarn as they sit, restless as the leaves of the tall poplar tree: and the soft olive oil drops off that linen, so closely is it woven. For as the Phæacian men are skilled beyond all others in driving a swift ship upon the deep, even so are the women the most cunning at the loom, for Athene hath given them notable wisdom in all fair handiwork and cunning wit.

There the steadfast goodly Odysseus stood and gazed. But when he had gazed at all and wondered, he passed quickly over the threshold within the house. And he found the captain and the counsellors of the Phæacians pouring forth wine to the keen-sighted god, the slayer of Argos; for to him they poured the last cup when they were minded to take rest. Now the steadfast goodly Odysseus went through the house, clad in a thick mist, which Athene shed around him, till he came to Arete and the king Alcinoüs. And Odysseus cast his hands about the knees of Arete, and then it was that the wondrous mist melted from off him, and a silence fell on them that were within the house at the sight of him, and they marvelled as they beheld him. Then Odysseus began his prayer:

"Arete, after many toils am I come to thy husband and to thy knees and to these guests, and may the gods vouchsafe them a happy life, and may each one leave to his children after him his substance in his halls and whatever dues of honour the people have rendered unto him. But speed, I pray you, my parting, that I may come the more quickly to mine own country, for already too long do I suffer affliction far from my friends."

Therewith he sat him down by the hearth in the ashes at the fire, and behold, a dead silence fell on all. And at the last the ancient lord Echeneus spake among

them, an elder of the Phæacians, excellent in speech and skilled in much wisdom of old time. With good will he made harangue and spake among them:

"Alcinoüs, this truly is not the more seemly way, nor is it fitting that the stranger should sit upon the ground in the ashes by the hearth. Nay come, bid the stranger arise, and set him on a chair inlaid with silver, and command the henchmen to mix the wine, that we may pour forth likewise before Zeus, whose joy is in the thunder, who attendeth upon reverend suppliants. And let the housewife give supper to the stranger out of such stores as be within."

Now when the mighty king Alcinoüs heard this saying, he took Odysseus, the wise and crafty, by the hand, and raised him from the hearth and set him on a shining chair, whence he bade his son give place, valiant Laodamas, who sat next him and was his dearest. And a handmaid bare water for the hands in a goodly golden ewer, and poured it forth over a silver basin to wash withal, and drew to his side a polished table. And a grave dame bare wheaten bread and set it by him and laid upon the board many dainties, giving freely of such things as she had by her. So the steadfast goodly Odysseus did eat and drink, and then the mighty Alcinoüs spake unto the henchman:

"Pontonoüs, mix the bowl and serve out the wine to

all in the hall, that we may pour forth likewise before Zeus, whose joy is in the thunder, who attendeth upon reverend suppliants."

So spake he, and Pontonoüs mixed the honey-hearted wine, and served it out to all, when he had poured for libation into each cup in turn. But when they had poured forth and had drunken to their hearts' content, Alcinoüs made harangue and spake among them:

"Hear me, ye captains and counseliors of the Phæacians, that I may speak as my spirit bids me. Now that the feast is over, go ye home and lie down to rest; and in the morning we will call yet more elders together, and entertain the stranger in the halls and do fair sacrifice to the gods, and thereafter we will likewise bethink us of the convoy, that so without pain or grief yonder stranger may by our convoy reach his own country speedily and with joy, even though he be from very far away. So shall he suffer no hurt or harm in mid passage, ere he set foot on his own land; but thereafter he shall endure such things as Fate and the stern spinning women drew off the spindles for him at his birth when his mother bare him. But if he is some deathless god come down from heaven, then do the gods herein imagine some new device against us. For always heretofore the gods appear manifest amongst us, whensoever we offer glorious hecatombs, and they feast by our side, sitting at the same board;

yea, and even if a wayfarer going all alone has met with them, they use no disguise, since we are near of kin to them, even as are the Cyclopes and the wild tribes of the Giants."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying: "Alcinoüs, that thought be far from thee! for I bear no likeness either in form or fashion to the deathless gods, who keep wide heaven, but to men that die. Whomsoever ye know of human kind the heaviest laden with sorrow, to them might I liken myself in my griefs. Yea, and I might tell of yet other woes, even the long tale of toil that by the gods' will I endured. But as for me, suffer me to sup, afflicted as I am; for nought is there more shameless than a ravening belly, which biddeth a man perforce be mindful of him, though one be worn and sorrowful in spirit, even as I have sorrow of heart; yet evermore he biddeth me eat and drink and maketh me utterly to forget all my sufferings, and commandeth me to take my fill. But do ye bestir you at the breaking of the day, that so ye may set me, hapless as I am, upon my country's soil, albeit after much suffering. Ah, and may life leave me when I have had sight of mine own possessions, my thralls, and my dwelling that is great and high!"

So spake he, and they all assented thereto, and bade send the stranger on his way, for that he had spoken

aright. Now when they had poured forth and had drunken to their hearts' content, they went each one to his house to lay them to rest. But goodly Odysseus was left behind in the hall, and by him sat Arete and godlike Alcinoüs; and the maids cleared away the furniture of the feast; and white-armed Arete first spake among them. For she knew the mantle and the doublet, when she saw the goodly raiment that she herself had wrought with the women her handmaids. So she uttered her voice and spake to him winged words:

"Sir, I am bold to ask thee first of this. Who art thou of the sons of men, and whence? Who gave thee this raiment? Didst thou not say indeed that thou camest hither wandering over the deep?"

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered her, telling her of Calypso and the raft and his meeting with Nausicaä.

And Alcinoüs answered again, and spake saying: "Sir, surely this was no right thought of my daughter, in that she brought thee not to our house with the women her handmaids, though thou didst first entreat her grace."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered, and said unto him: "My lord, chide not, I pray thee, for this the blameless maiden. For indeed she bade me follow with her company, but I would not for fear and very shame, lest perchance thine heart might be clouded

at the sight; for a jealous race upon the earth are we, the tribes of men."

And Alcinoüs answered yet again, and spake saying: "Sir, my heart within me is not of such temper as to have been wroth without a cause: due measure in all things is best. Would to father Zeus, and Athene, and Apollo, would that so goodly a man as thou art, and like-minded with me, thou wouldst wed my daughter, and be called my son, here abiding: so would I give thee house and wealth, if thou wouldst stay of thine own will: but against thy will shall none of the Phæacians keep thee: never be this well-pleasing in the eyes of father Zeus! And now I ordain an escort for thee on a certain day, that thou mayst surely know, and that day the morrow. Then shalt thou lay thee down overcome by sleep, and they the while shall smite the calm waters, till thou come to thy country and thy house, and whatsoever place is dear to thee. And thou shalt know for thyself how far my ships are the best, and how my young men excel at tossing the salt water with the oar-blade."

So spake he, and the steadfast goodly Odysseus rejoiced; and then he uttered a word in prayer, and called aloud to Zeus: "Father Zeus, Oh that Alcinoüs may fulfil all that he hath said, so may his fame never be quenched upon the earth, the grain-giver, and I should come to mine own land!"

Thus they spake one to the other. And white-armed Arete bade her handmaids set out bedsteads beneath the gallery, and cast fair purple blankets over them, and spread coverlets above, and thereon lay thick mantles to be a clothing over all. So they went from the hall with torch in hand. But when they had busied them and spread the good bedstead, they stood by Odysseus and called unto him, saying:

"Up now, stranger, and get thee to sleep, thy bed is made."

So spake they, and it seemed to him that rest was wondrous good. So he slept there, the steadfast goodly Odysseus, on the jointed bedstead, beneath the echoing gallery.

BOOK VIII

The next day's entertainment of Odysseus, where he sees them contend in wrestling and other excercises, and upon provocation took up a greater stone than that which they were throwing, and overthrew them all. Alcinoüs and the lords give him presents. And how the king asked his name, his country, and his adventures.

Now when early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, then the mighty king Alcinoüs gat him up from his bed; and Odysseus, of the seed of Zeus, likewise uprose, the waster of cities. And the mighty king Alcinoüs led the way to the assembly place of the Phæacians,

which they had stablished hard by the ships. So when they had come thither, and set them down on the polished stones close by each other, Pallas Athene went on her way through the town, in the semblance of the herald of wise Alcinoüs, devising a return for the great-hearted Odysseus. Then standing by each man she spake saying:

"Hither now get ye to the assembly, ye captains and counsellors of the Phæacians, that ye may learn concerning the stranger, who hath lately come to the palace of wise Alcinoüs, in his wanderings over the deep, and his form is like the deathless gods."

Therewith she aroused the spirit and desire of each one, and speedily the meeting-places and seats were filled with men that came to the gathering yea, and many an one marvelled at the sight of the wise son of Laertes, for wondrous was the grace Athene poured upon his head and shoulders, and she made him greater and more mighty to behold, that he might win love and worship and honour among all the Phæacians, and that he might accomplish many feats, wherein the Phæacians made trial of Odysseus. Now when they were gathered and come together, Alcinoüs made harangue and spake among them:

"Hearken, ye captains and counsellors of the Phæacians, and I will say that which my spirit within me bids me utter. This stranger, I know not who he is,

hath come to my house in his wandering, whether from the men of the dawning or the westward, and he presses for a convoy, and prays that it be assured to him. So let us, as in time past, speed on the convoy. For never, nay never, doth any man who cometh to my house, abide here long in sorrow for want of help upon his way. Nay, come let us draw down a black ship to the fair salt sea, for her first voyage, and let them choose fifty and two noble youths throughout the township, who have been proved heretofore the best. And when ye have made fast the oars upon the benches, step all ashore, and thereafter come to our house, and quickly fall to feasting; and I will make good provision for all. To the noble youths I give this commandment; but ye others, sceptred kings, come to my fair dwelling, that we may entertain the stranger in the halls, and let no man make excuse. Moreover, bid hither the divine minstrel, Demodocus, for the god hath given minstrelsy to him as to none other, to make men glad in what way soever his spirit stirs him to sing."

He spake and led the way, and the sceptred kings accompanied him, while the henchman went for the divine minstrel. And chosen youths, fifty and two, departed at his command, to the shore of the unharvested sea. But after they had gone down to the ship and to the sea, first of all they drew the ship down to the

deep water, and placed the mast and sails in the black ship, and fixed the oars in leathern loops, all orderly, and spread forth the white sails. And they moored her high out in the shore water, and thereafter went on their way to the great palace of the wise Alcinoüs. Now the galleries and the courts and the rooms were thronged with men that came to the gathering, for there were many, young and old. Then Alcinoüs sacrificed twelve sheep among them, and eight boars with flashing tusks, and two oxen with trailing feet. These they flayed and made ready, and dressed a goodly feast.

Then the henchman drew near, leading with him the beloved minstrel, whom the Muse loved dearly, and she gave him both good and evil; of his sight she reft him, but granted him sweet song. Then Pontonoüs, the henchman, set for him a high chair inlaid with silver, in the midst of the guests, leaning it against the tall pillar, and he hung the loud lyre on a pin, close above his head, and showed him how to lay his hands on it. And close by him he placed a basket, and a fair table, and a goblet of wine by his side, to drink when his spirit bade him. So they stretched forth their hands upon the good cheer spread before them. But after they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, the Muse stirred the minstrel to sing the songs of famous men, even that lay whereof the fame had

then reached the wide heaven, namely, the quarrel between Odysseus and Achilles, son of Peleus; how once up a time they contended in fierce words at a rich festival of the gods.

This song it was that the famous minstrel sang; but Odysseus caught his great purple cloak with his stalwart hands, and drew it down over his head, and hid his comely face, for he was ashamed to shed tears beneath his brows in presence of the Phæacians. Yea, and oft as the divine minstrel paused in his song, Odysseus would wipe away the tears, and draw the cloak from off his head, and take the two-handled goblet and pour forth before the gods. But whensoever he began again, and the chiefs of the Phæacians stirred him to sing, in delight at the lay, again would Odysseus cover up his head and make moan. Now none of all the company marked him weeping, but Alcinoüs alone noted it and was ware thereof as he sat by him and heard him groaning heavily. And presently he spake among the Phæacians, masters of the oar:

"Hearken, ye captains and counsellors of the Phæacians; now have our souls been satisfied with the good feast, and with the lyre, which is the mate of the rich banquet. Let us go forth anon, and make trial of divers games, that the stranger may tell his friends, when home he returneth, how greatly we excel all men in boxing, and wrestling, and leaping, and speed of foot."

He spake, and led the way, and they went with him. And the henchman hung the loud lyre on the pin, and took the hand of Demodocus, and led him forth from the hall, and guided him by the same way, whereby those others, the chiefs of the Phæacians, had gone to gaze upon the games. So they went on their way to the place of assembly, and with them a great company innumerable; and many a noble youth stood up to play. Now when they had all taken their pleasure in the games, Laodamas, son of Alcinoüs, spake among them:

"Come, my friends, let us ask the stranger whether he is skilled or practised in any sport. Ill fashioned, at least, he is not in his thighs and sinewy legs and hands withal, and his stalwart neck and mighty strength: yea and he lacks not youth, but is crushed by many troubles. For I tell thee there is nought else worse than the sea to confound a man, how hardy soever he may be."

And Euryalus in turn made answer, and said: "Laodamas, verily thou hast spoken this word in season. Go now thyself and challenge him, and declare thy saying."

Now when the good son of Alcinoüs heard this, he went and stood in the midst, and spake unto Odysseus: "Come, do thou too, father and stranger, try thy skill in the sports, if haply thou art practised in any; and thou art like to have knowledge of games, for there is

no greater glory for a man while yet he lives, than that which he achieves by hand and foot. Come, then, make easy, and cast away care from thy soul; thy journey shall not now be long delayed; lo, thy ship is even now drawn down to the sea, and the men of thy company are ready."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying: "Laodamas, wherefore do ye mock me, requiring this thing of me? Sorrow is far nearer my heart than sports, for much have I endured and laboured sorely in time past, and now I sit in this your gathering, craving my return, and making my prayer to the king and all the people."

And Euryalus answered, and rebuked him to his face: "No truly, stranger, nor do I think thee at all like one that is skilled in games, whereof there are many among men; rather art thou such an one as comes and goes in a benched ship, a master of sailors that are merchantmen, one with a memory for his freight, or that hath the charge of a cargo homeward bound, and of greedily gotten gains; thou seemest not a man of thy hands."

Then Odysseus of many counsels looked fiercely on him and said: "Stranger, thou hast not spoken well; thou art like a man presumptuous. So true it is that the gods do not give every gracious gift to all, neither shapeliness, nor wisdom, nor skilled speech. Yea, thou

hast stirred my spirit in my breast by speaking thus amiss. I am not all unversed in sports, as thy words go, but methinks I was among the foremost while as yet I trusted in my youth and my hands, but now I am holden in misery and pains: for I have endured much in passing through the wars of men and the grievous waves of the sea. Yet even so, for all my affliction, I will essay the games, for thy word hath bitten to the quick, and thou hast roused me with thy saying."

He spake, and clad even as he was in his mantle leaped to his feet, and caught up a weight larger than the rest, a huge weight heavier far than those wherewith the Phæacians contended in casting. With one whirl he sent it from his stout hand, and the stone flew hurtling: and the Phæacians, of the long oars, those mariners renowned, crouched to earth beneath the rushing of the stone. Beyond all the marks it flew, so lightly it sped from his hand, and Athene in the fashion of a man marked the place, and spake and hailed him:

"Yea, even a blind man, stranger, might discern that token if he groped for it, for it is in no wise lost among the throng of the others, but is far the first; for this bout then take heart: not one of the Phæacians shall attain thereunto or overpass it."

So spake she; and the steadfast goodly Odysseus rejoiced and was glad, for that he saw a true friend in

the lists. Then with a lighter heart he spake amid the Phæacians:

"Now reach ye this throw, young men, if ye may; and soon, methinks, will I cast another after it, as far or yet further. And whomsoever of the rest his heart and spirit stir thereto, hither let him come and try the issue with me, in boxing or in wrestling or even in the foot race, I care not which, for ye have greatly angered me: let any of all the Phæacians come save Laodamas alone, for he is mine host: who would strive with one that entreated him kindly? But for the rest, I refuse none and hold none lightly, but I fain would know and prove them face to face. For I am no weakling in all sports, even in the feats of men. I know well how to handle the polished bow, and ever the first would I be to shoot and smite my man in the press of foes, even though many of my company stood by, and were aiming at the enemy. Alone Philoctetes in the Trojan land surpassed me with the bow in our Achæan archery. But I avow myself far more excellent than all besides, of the mortals that are now upon the earth and live by bread. And with the spear I can throw further than any other man can shoot an arrow. Only I doubt that in the foot race some of the Phæacians may outstrip me, for I have been shamefully broken in many waters, seeing that there was no continual sustenance on board: wherefore my knees are loosened."

So spake he and all kept silence; and Alcinoüs alone answered him, saying:

"We are no perfect boxers, nor wrestlers, but speedy runners, and the best of seamen; and dear to us ever is the banquet, and the harp, and the dance, and changes of raiment, and the warm bath, and love, and sleep. Lo, now arise, ye dancers of the Phæacians, the best in the land, and make sport, that so the stranger may tell his friends, when he returneth home, how far we surpass all men besides in seamanship, and speed of foot, and in the dance and song."

So spake Alcinoüs the godlike, and the henchman rose to bear the hollow lyre from the king's palace. Then stood up nine chosen men in all, the judges of the people, who were wont to order all things in the lists aright. So they levelled the place for the dance, and made a fair ring and a wide. And the henchman drew near bearing the loud lyre to Demodocus, who gat him into the midst, and round him stood boys in their first bloom, skilled in the dance, and they smote the good floor with their feet. And Odysseus gazed at the twinklings of the feet, and marvelled in spirit.

Then goodly Odysseus spake unto Alcinoüs: "My lord Alcinoüs, thou didst boast thy dancers to be the best in the world, and lo, thy words are fulfilled; I wonder as I look on them."

So spake he, and the mighty king Alcinoüs rejoiced

and spake at once among the Phæacians, masters of the oar:

"Hearken ye, captains and counsellors of the Phæacians, this stranger seems to me a wise man enough. Come then, let us give him a stranger's gift, as is meet. Behold, there are twelve glorious princes who rule among this people and bear sway, and I myself am the thirteenth. Now each man among you bring a fresh robe and a doublet, and a talent of fine gold, and let us speedily carry all these gifts together, that the stranger may take them in his hands, and go to supper with a glad heart. As for Euryalus let him yield amends to the man himself with soft speech and with a gift, for his was no gentle saying."

So spake he, and they all assented thereto, and would have it so. And each one sent forth his henchman to fetch his gift, and Euryalus answered the king and spake, saying:

"My lord Alcinoüs, most notable among all the people, I will make atonement to thy guest according to thy word. I will give him a hanger all of bronze, with a silver hilt thereto, and a sheath of fresh-sawn ivory covers it about, and it shall be to him a thing of price."

Therewith he puts into his hands the hanger dight with silver, and uttering his voice spake to him winged words: "Hail, stranger and father; and if aught griev-

ous hath been spoken, may the storm-winds soon snatch and bear it away. But may the gods grant thee to see thy wife and to come to thine own country, for all too long hast thou endured affliction away from thy friends."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him saying: "Thou too, my friend, all hail; and may the gods vouchsafe thee happiness, and mayest thou never miss this sword which thou hast given me, thou that with soft speech hast yielded me amends."

He spake and hung about his shoulders the silver-studded sword. And the sun sank, and the noble gifts were brought him. Then the proud henchmen bare them to the palace of Alcinoüs, and the sons of noble Alcinoüs took the fair gifts, and set them by their reverend mother. And the mighty king Alcinoüs led the way, and they came in and sat them down on the high seats. And the mighty Alcinoüs spake unto Arete:

"Bring me hither, my lady, a choice coffer, the best thou hast, and thyself place therein a fresh robe and a doublet, and heat for our guest a cauldron on the fire, and warm water, that after the bath the stranger may see all the gifts duly arrayed which the noble Phæacians bare hither, and that he may have joy in the feast, and in hearing the song of the minstrelsy. Also I will give him a beautiful golden chalice of mine own,

that he may be mindful of me all the days of his life when he poureth the drink-offering to Zeus and to the other gods."

So spake he, and Arete bade her handmaids to set a great cauldron on the fire with what speed they might. And they set the cauldron for the filling of the bath on the blazing fire, and poured water therein, and took faggots and kindled them beneath. So the fire began to circle round the belly of the cauldron, and the water waxed hot. Meanwhile Arete brought forth for her guest the beautiful coffer from the treasure chamber, and bestowed fair gifts therein, raiment and gold, which the Phæacians gave him. And with her own hands she placed therein a robe and goodly doublet, and uttering her voice spake to him winged words:

"Do thou now look to the lid, and quickly tie the knot, lest any man spoil thy goods by the way, when presently thou fallest on sweet sleep travelling in thy black ship."

Now when the steadfast goodly Odysseus heard this saying, forthwith he fixed on the lid, and quickly tied the curious knot, which the lady Circe on a time had taught him. Then straightway the housewife bade him go to the bath and bathe him; and he saw the warm water and was glad, for he was not wont to be so cared for, from the day that he left the house of fair-tressed Calypso.

Now after the maids had bathed him and anointed

him with olive oil, and had cast a fair mantle and a doublet upon him, he stept forth from the bath, and went to be with the chiefs at their wine. And Nausicaä, dowered with beauty by the gods, stood by the doorpost of the well-builded hall, and marvelled at Odysseus, beholding him before her eyes, and she uttered her voice and spake to him winged words:

"Farewell, stranger, and even in thine own country bethink thee of me upon a time, for that to me first thou owest the ransom of life."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her saying: "Nausicaä, daughter of great-hearted Alcinoüs, yea, may Zeus, the thunderer, the lord of Here, grant me to reach my home and see the day of my returning; so would I, even there, do thee worship as to a god, all my days for evermore, for thou, lady, hast given me my life."

He spake and sat him in the high seat by king Alcinoüs. And now they were serving out the portions and mixing the wine. Then the henchman drew nigh leading the sweet minstrel, Demodocus, that was had in honour of the people. So he set him in the midst of the feasters, and made him lean against a tall column. Then to the henchman spake Odysseus of many counsels, for he had cut off a portion of the chine of a white-toothed boar, whereon yet more was left, with rich fat on either side:

"Lo, henchman, take this mess, and hand it to Demodocus, that he may eat, and I will bid him hail, despite my sorrow. For minstrels from all men on earth get their meed of honour and worship; inasmuch as the Muse teacheth them the paths of song, and loveth the tribe of minstrels."

Thus he spake, and the henchman bare the mess, and set it upon the knees of the lord Demodocus, and he took it, and was glad of heart. Then they stretched forth their hands upon the good cheer set before them. Now after they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, then Odysseus of many counsels spake to Demodocus, saying:

"Come now, change thy strain, and sing of the fashioning of the horse of wood, which Epeius made by the aid of Athene, even the guileful thing, that goodly Odysseus led up into the citadel, when he had laden it with the men who wasted Ilios. If thou wilt indeed rehearse me this aright, so will I be thy witness among all men, how the god of his grace hath given thee the gift of wondrous song."

So spake he, and the minstrel, being stirred by the god, began and showed forth his minstrelsy. He took up the tale where it tells how the Argives of the one part set fire to their huts, and went aboard their decked ships and sailed away, while those others, the fellowship of renowned Odysseus, were now seated in the

assembly-place of the Trojans, all hidden in the horse, for the Trojans themselves had dragged him to the citadel. So the horse stood there, while seated all around him the people spake many things confusedly and three ways their counsel looked; either to cleave the hollow timber with the pitiless spear, or to drag it to the brow of the hill, and hurl it from the rocks, or to leave it as a mighty offering to appease the gods. And on this wise it was to be at the last. For the doom was on them to perish when their city should have closed upon the great horse of wood, wherein sat all the bravest of the Argives, bearing to the Trojans death and destiny. And he sang how the sons of the Achæans poured forth from the horse, and left the hollow lair, and sacked the burg. And he sang how and where each man wasted the town, and of Odysseus, how he went like Ares to the house of Deiphobus with godlike Menelaus. It was there, he said, that Odysseus adventured the most grievous battle, and in the end prevailed, by grace of great-hearted Athene.

This was the song that the famous minstrel sang. But the heart of Odysseus melted, and the tear wet his cheeks beneath the eyelids. Now none of all the company marked him weeping; but Alcinoüs alone noted it, and was ware thereof, as he sat nigh him and heard him groaning heavily. And presently he spake among the Phæacians, masters of the oar:

"Hearken, ye captains and counsellors of the Phæacians, and now let Demodocus hold his hand from the loud lyre, for this song of his is nowise pleasing alike to all. From the time that we began to sup, and that the divine minstrel was moved to sing, ever since hath yonder stranger never ceased from woeful lamentation: sore grief, methinks, hath encompassed his heart. Nay, but let the minstrel cease, that we may all alike make merry, hosts and guests, since it is far meeter so. Wherefore do thou too hide not now with crafty purpose aught whereof I ask thee; it were more meet for thee to tell it out. Say, what is the name whereby they call thee at home, even thy father and thy mother, and others thy townsmen and the dwellers round about? For there is none of all mankind nameless, neither the mean man nor yet the noble, from the first hour of his birth, but parents bestow a name on every man so soon as he is born. Tell me too of thy land, thy township, and thy city, that our ships may conceive of their course to bring thee thither. But come now, declare me this and plainly tell it all; whither wast thou borne wandering, and to what shores of men thou camest; tell me of the people and of their fair-lying cities, of those whoso are hard and wild and unjust, and of those likewise who are hospitable and of a god-fearing mind. Declare, too, wherefore thou dost weep and mourn in spirit at the tale of the faring of

the Argive Danaäns and the lay of Ilios. All this the gods have fashioned, and have woven the skein of death for men, that there might be a song in the ears even of the folk of aftertime. Hadst thou even a kinsman by marriage that fell before Ilios, a true man, a daughter's husband or wife's father, such as are nearest us after those of our own stock and blood? Or else, maybe, some loving friend, a good man and true; for a friend with an understanding heart is no whit worse than a brother."

BOOK IX

Odysseus relates, first, what befell him amongst the Cicones at Ismarus; secondly, amongst the Lotophagi; thirdly, how he was used by the Cyclops Polyphemus.

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him saying: "Now, first, will I tell my name, that ye too may know it, and that I when I have escaped the pitiless day, may yet be your host, though my home is in a far country. I am ODYSSEUS, SON OF LAERTES, who am in men's minds for all manner of wiles, and my fame reaches unto heaven. And I dwell in clear-seen Ithaca, wherein is a mountain Neriton, with trembling forest leaves, standing manifest to view, and many islands

lie around, very near one to the other, Dulichium and Same, and wooded Zacynthus. Now Ithaca lies low, furthest up the sea-line toward the darkness, but those others face the dawning and the sun: a rugged isle, but a good nurse of noble youths; and for myself I can see nought beside sweeter than a man's own country. But come, let me tell thee too of the troubles of my journeying, which Zeus laid on me as I came from Troy.

"The wind that bare me from Ilios brought me nigh to the Cicones, even to Ismarus, whereupon I sacked their city and slew the people. And from out the city we took their wives and much substance, and divided them amongst us, that none through me might go lacking his proper share. Howbeit, thereafter I commanded that we should flee with a swift foot, but my men in their great folly hearkened not. There was much wine still a-drinking, and still they slew many flocks of sheep by the sea shore and kine with trailing feet and shambling gait. Meanwhile the Cicones went and raised a cry to other Cicones their neighbors, dwelling inland, who were more in number than they and braver withal: skilled they were to fight with men from chariots, and when need was on foot. So they gathered in the early morning as thick as leaves and flowers that spring in their season—yea and in that hour an evil doom of Zeus stood by us, ill-fated men, that so we might be sore afflicted. They set their battle

in array by the swift ships, and the hosts cast at one another with their bronze-shod spears. So long as it was morn and the sacred day waxed stronger, so long we abode their assault and beat them off, albeit they outnumbered us. But when the sun was wending to the time of the loosing of cattle, then at last the Cicones drave in the Achæans and overcame them, and six of my goodly-greaved company perished from each ship: but the remnant of us escaped death and destiny.

"Thence we sailed onward stricken at heart, yet glad as men saved from death, albeit we had lost our dear companions. Nor did my curved ships move onward ere we had called thrice on each of those our hapless fellows, who died at the hands of the Cicones on the plain. Now Zeus, gatherer of the clouds, aroused the North Wind against our ships with a terrible tempest, and covered land and sea alike with clouds, and down sped night from heaven. Thus the ships were driven headlong, and their sails were torn to shreds by the might of the wind. So we lowered the sails into the hold, in fear of death, but rowed the ships landward apace. There for two nights and two days we lay continually, consuming our hearts with weariness and sorrow. But when the fair-tressed Dawn had at last brought the full light of the third day, we set up the masts and hoisted the white sails and sat us down, while the wind and the helmsman guided the ships.

And now I should have come to mine own country all unhurt, but the wave and the stream of the sea and the North Wind swept me from my course as I was doubling Malea, and drave me wandering past Cythera.

"Thence for nine whole days was I borne by ruinous winds over the teeming deep; but on the tenth day we set foot on the land of the lotus-eaters, who eat a flowery food. So we stepped ashore and drew water, and straightway my company took their midday meal by the swift ships. Now when we had tasted meat and drink I sent forth certain of my company to go and make search what manner of men they were who here live upon the earth by bread, and I chose out two of my fellows, and sent a third with them as herald. Then straightway they went and mixed with the men of the lotus-eaters, and so it was that the lotus-eaters devised not death for our fellows, but gave them of the lotus to taste. Now whosoever of them did eat the honey-sweet fruits of the lotus had no more wish to bring tidings nor to come back, but there he chose to abide with the lotus-eating men, ever feeding on the lotus, and forgetful of his homeward way. Therefore I led them back to the ships weeping, and sore against their will, and dragged them beneath the benches, and bound them in the hollow barques. But I commanded the rest of my well-loved company to make speed and go on board the

swift ships, lest haply any should eat of the lotus and be forgetful of returning. Right soon they embarked and sat upon the benches, and sitting orderly they smote the grey sea water with their oars.

"Thence we sailed onward stricken at heart. And we came to the land of the Cyclopes, a froward and a lawless folk, who trusting to the deathless gods plant not aught with their hands, neither plough: but, behold, all these things spring for them in plenty, unsown and untilled, wheat, and barley, and vines, which bear great clusters of the juice of the grape, and the rain of Zeus gives them increase. These have neither gatherings for council nor oracles of law, but they dwell in hollow caves on the crests of the high hills, and each one utters the law to his children and his wives, and they reck not one of another.

"Now there is a waste isle stretching without the harbour of the land of the Cyclopes, neither nigh at hand nor yet afar off, a woodland isle, wherein are wild goats unnumbered, for no path of men scares them, nor do hunters resort thither who suffer hardships in the wood, as they range the mountain crests. Thither we sailed, and some god guided us through the night, for it was dark and there was no light to see, a mist lying deep about the ships, nor did the moon show her light from heaven but was shut in with clouds. No man then beheld that island, neither saw we the long waves rolling to the beach, till we had run our decked ships

ashore. And when our ships were beached, we took down all their sails, and ourselves too stept forth upon the strand of the sea, and there we fell into sound sleep and waited for the bright Dawn.

"So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, in wonder at the island we roamed over the length thereof: and the Nymphs, the daughters of Zeus, lord of the ægis, started the wild goats of the hills, that my company might have wherewith to sup. Anon we took to us our curved bows from out the ships and long spears, and arrayed in three bands we began shooting at the goats; and the god soon gave us game in plenty. Now twelve ships bare me company, and to each ship fell nine goats for a portion, but for me alone they set ten apart.

"Thus we sat there the livelong day until the going down of the sun, feasting on abundant flesh and on sweet wine. For the red wine was not yet spent from out the ships, but somewhat was yet therein, for we had each one drawn off large store thereof in jars, when we took the sacred citadel of the Cicones. And we looked across to the land of the Cyclopes who dwell nigh, and to the smoke, and to the voice of the men, and of the sheep and of the goats. And when the sun had sunk and darkness had come on, then we laid us to rest upon the sea-beach. So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, then I called a gathering of my men, and spake among them all:

"'Abide here all the rest of you, my dear companions; but I will go with mine own ship and my ship's company, and make proof of these men, what manner of folk they are, whether froward, and wild, and unjust, or hospitable and of god-fearing mind.'

"So I spake, and I climbed the ship's side, and bade my company themselves to mount, and to loose the hawsers. So they soon embarked and sat upon the benches, and sitting orderly smote the grey sea water with their oars. Now when we had come to the land that lies hard by, we saw a cave on the border near to the sea, lofty and roofed over with laurels and there many flocks of sheep and goats were used to rest. And about it a high outer court was built with stones, deep bedded, and with tall pines and oaks with their high crown of leaves. And a man was wont to sleep therein, of monstrous size, who shepherded his flocks alone and afar, and was not conversant with others, but dwelt apart in lawlessness of mind. Yea, for he was a monstrous thing and fashioned marvellously, nor was he like to any man that lives by bread, but like a wooded peak of the towering hills, which stands out apart and alone from others.

"Then I commanded the rest of my well-loved company to tarry there by the ship, and to guard the ship, but I chose out twelve men, the best of my company, and sallied forth. Now I had with me a goat-

skin of the dark wine and sweet, which Maron, son of Euanthes, had given me, the priest of Apollo, the god that watched over Ismarus. And he gave it, for that we had protected him with his wife and child reverently; for he dwelt in a thick grove of Phœbus Apollo. And he made me splendid gifts; he gave me seven talents of gold well wrought, and he gave me a mixing bowl of pure silver, and furthermore wine which he drew off in twelve jars in all, sweet wine unmingled, a draught divine; nor did any of his servants or of his handmaids in the house know thereof, but himself and his dear wife and one housedame only. And as often as they drank that red wine honey sweet, he would fill one cup and pour it into twenty measures of water, and a marvellous sweet smell went up from the mixing bowl: then truly it was no pleasure to refrain.

"With this wine I filled a great skin, and bare it with me, and corn too I put in a wallet, for my lordly spirit straightway had a boding that a man would come to me, a strange man, clothed in mighty strength, one that knew not judgment and justice.[1]

"Soon we came to the cave, but we found him not within; he was shepherding his fat flocks in the pastures. So we went into the cave, and gazed on all that was therein. The baskets were well laden with cheeses,

[1] [Literally, knowing neither dooms nor ordinances of law.]

and the folds were thronged with lambs and kids; each kind was penned by itself, the firstlings apart, and the summer lambs apart, apart too the younglings of the flock. Now all the vessels swam with whey, the milkpails and the bowls, the well-wrought vessels whereinto he milked. My company then spake and besought me first of all to take of the cheeses and to return, and afterwards to make haste and drive off the kids and lambs to the swift ships from out the pens, and to sail over the salt sea water. Howbeit I hearkened not (and far better would it have been), but waited to see the giant himself, and whether he would give me gifts as a stranger's due. Yet was not his coming to be with joy to my company.

"Then we kindled a fire, and made burnt-offering, and ourselves likewise took of the cheeses, and did eat, and sat waiting for him within till he came back, shepherding his flocks. And he bore a grievous weight of dry wood, against supper time. This log he cast down with a din inside the cave, and in fear we fled to the secret place of the rock. As for him, he drave his fat flocks into the wide cavern, even all that he was wont to milk; but the males both of the sheep and of the goats he left without in the deep yard. Thereafter he lifted a huge door-stone and weighty, and set it in the mouth of the cave, such an one as two and twenty good four-wheeled wains could not raise from the

ground, so mighty a sheer rock did he set against the doorway. Then he sat down and milked the ewes and bleating goats all orderly, and beneath each ewe he placed her young. And anon he curdled one half of the white milk, and massed it together, and stored it in wicker-baskets, and the other half he let stand in pails, that he might have it to take and drink against supper time. Now when he had done all his work busily, then he kindled the fire anew, and espied us, and made question:

" 'Strangers, who are ye? Whence sail ye over the wet ways? On some trading enterprise or at adventure do ye rove, even as sea-robbers over the brine, for at hazard of their own lives they wander, bringing bale to alien men?'

"So spake he, but as for us our heart within us was broken for terror of the deep voice and his own monstrous shape; yet despite all I answered and spake unto him, saying:

" 'Lo, we are Achæans, driven wandering from Troy, by all manner of winds over the great gulf of the sea; seeking our homes we fare, but another path have we come, by other ways: even such, methinks, was the will and the counsel of Zeus. And we avow us to be the men of Agamemnon, son of Atreus, whose fame is even now the mightiest under heaven, so great a city did he sack, and destroyed many people; but

as for us we have lighted here, and come to these thy knees, if perchance thou wilt give us a stranger's gift, or make any present, as is the due of strangers. Nay, lord, have regard to the gods, for we are thy suppliants; and Zeus is the avenger of suppliants and sojourners, Zeus, the god of the stranger, who fareth in the company of reverend strangers.'

"So I spake, and anon he answered out of his pitiless heart: 'Thou art witless, my stranger, or thou hast come from afar, who biddest me either to fear or shun the gods. For the Cyclôpes pay no heed to Zeus, lord of the ægis, nor to the blessed gods, for verily we are better men than they. Nor would I, to shun the enmity of Zeus, spare either thee or thy company, unless my spirit bade me. But tell me where thou didst stay thy well-wrought ship on thy coming? Was it perchance at the far end of the island, or hard by, that I may know?'

"So he spake tempting me, but he cheated me not, who knew full much, and I answered him again with words of guile:

"'As for my ship, Poseidon, the shaker of the earth, brake it to pieces, for he cast it upon the rocks at the border of your country, and brought it nigh the headland, and a wind bare it thither from the sea. But I with these my men escaped from utter doom.'

"So I spake, and out of his pitiless heart he answered me not a word, but sprang up, and laid his hands upon

my fellows, and clutching two together dashed them, as they had been whelps, to the earth, and the brain flowed forth upon the ground, and the earth was wet. Then cut he them up piecemeal, and made ready his supper. So he ate even as a mountain-bred lion, and ceased not, devouring entrails and flesh and bones with their marrow. And we wept and raised our hands to Zeus, beholding the cruel deeds; and we were at our wits' end. And after the Cyclops had filled his huge maw with human flesh and the milk he drank thereafter, he lay within the cave, stretched out among his sheep.

"So I took counsel in my great heart, whether I should draw near, and pluck my sharp sword from my thigh, and stab him in the breast, where the midrib holds the liver, feeling for the place with my hand. But my second thought withheld me, for so should we too have perished even there with utter doom. For we should not have prevailed to roll away with our hands from the lofty door the heavy stone which he set there. So for that time we made moan, awaiting the bright Dawn.

"Now when early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, again he kindled the fire and milked his goodly flocks all orderly, and beneath each ewe set her lamb. Anon when he had done all his work busily, again he seized yet two other men and made ready his

mid-day meal. And after the meal, lightly he moved away the great door-stone, and drave his fat flocks forth from the cave, and afterwards he set it in its place again. as one might set the lid on a quiver. Then with a loud whoop, the Cyclops turned his fat flocks towards the hills; but I was left devising evil in the deep of my heart, if in any wise I might avenge me, and Athene grant me renown.

"And this was the counsel that showed best in my sight. There lay by a sheep-fold a great club of the Cyclops, a club of olive wood, yet green, which he had cut to carry with him when it should be seasoned. Now when we saw it we likened it in size to the mast of a black ship of twenty oars, a wide merchant vessel that traverses the great sea gulf, so huge it was to view in bulk and length. I stood thereby and cut off from it a portion as it were a fathom's length and set it by my fellows, and bade them fine it down, and they made it even, while I stood by and sharpened it to a point, and straightway I took it and hardened it in the bright fire. Then I laid it well away, and hid it beneath the dung, which was scattered in great heaps in the depths of the cave. And I bade my company cast lots among them, which of them should risk the adventure with me, and lift the bar and turn it about in his eye, when sweet sleep came upon him. And the lot fell upon those four whom I myself would

have been fain to choose, and I appointed myself to be the fifth among them. In the evening he came shepherding his flocks of goodly fleece, and presently he drave his fat flocks into the cave each and all, nor left he any without in the deep court-yard, whether through some foreboding, or perchance that the god so bade him do. Thereafter he lifted the huge door-stone and set it in the mouth of the cave, and sitting down he milked the ewes and bleating goats, all orderly, and beneath each ewe he placed her young. Then when he had done all his work busily, again he seized yet other two and made ready his supper. Then I stood by the Cyclops and spake to him, holding in my hands an ivy bowl of the dark wine:

"'Cyclops, take and drink wine after thy feast of man's meat, that thou mayest know what manner of drink this was that our ship held. And lo, I was bringing it thee as a drink offering, if haply thou mayest take pity and send me on my way home, but thy mad rage is past all sufferance. O hard of heart, how may another of the many men there be come ever to thee again, seeing that thy deeds have been lawless?'

"So I spake, and he took the cup and drank it off, and found great delight in drinking the sweet draught, and asked me for it yet a second time:

"'Give it me again of thy grace, and tell me thy name straightway, that I may give thee a stranger's

gift, wherein thou mayest be glad. Yea, for the earth, the grain-giver, bears for the Cyclops the mighty clusters of the juice of the grape, and the rain of Zeus gives them increase, but this is a rill of very nectar and ambrosia.'

"So he spake, and again I handed him the dark wine. Thrice I bare and gave it him, and thrice in his folly he drank it to the lees. Now when the wine had got about the wits of the Cyclops, then did I speak to him with soft words:

" 'Cyclops, thou askest me my renowned name, and I will declare it unto thee, and do thou grant me a stranger's gift, as thou didst promise. Noman is my name, and Noman they call me, my father and my mother and all my fellows.'

"So I spake, and straightway he answered me out of his pitiless heart:

" 'Noman will I eat last in the numbers of his fellows, and the others before him: that shall be thy gift.'

"Therewith he sank backwards and fell with face upturned, and there he lay with his great neck bent round, and sleep, that conquers all men, overcame him. And the wine and the fragments of men's flesh issued from his mouth, and he vomited, being heavy with wine. Then I thrust in that stake under the deep ashes, until it should grow hot, and I spake to my companions

comfortable words, lest any should hang back from me in fear. But when that bar of olive wood was just about to catch fire in the flame, green though it was, and began to glow terribly, even then I came nigh, and drew it from the coals, and my fellows gathered about me, and some god breathed great courage into us. For their part they seized the bar of olive wood, that was sharpened at the point, and thrust it into his eye, while I from my place aloft turned it about, as when a man bores a ship's beam with a drill, while his fellows below spin it with a strap, which they hold at either end, and the auger runs round continually. Even so did we seize the fiery-pointed brand and whirled it round in his eye, and the blood flowed about the heated bar. And the breath of the flame singed his eyelids and brows all about, as the ball of the eye burnt away, and the roots thereof crackled in the flame. And as when a smith dips an axe or adze in chill water with a great hissing, when he would temper it—for hereby anon comes the strength of iron—even so did his eye hiss round the stake of olive. And he raised a great and terrible cry, that the rock rang around, and we fled away in fear, while he plucked forth from his eye the brand bedabbled in much blood. Then maddened with pain he cast it from him with his hands, and called with a loud voice on the Cyclôpes, who dwelt about him in the caves along the windy heights. And they heard

the cry and flocked together from every side, and gathering round the cave asked him what ailed him:

"'What hath so distressed thee, Polyphemus, that thou criest thus aloud through the immortal night, and makest us sleepless? Surely no mortal driveth off thy flocks against thy will: surely none slayeth thyself by force or craft?'

"And the strong Polyphemus spake to them again from out the cave: 'My friends, Noman is slaying me by guile, nor at all by force.'

"And they answered and spake winged words: 'If then no man is violently handling thee in thy solitude, it can in no wise be that thou shouldest escape the sickness sent by mighty Zeus. Nay, pray thou to thy father, the lord Poseidon.'

"On this wise they spake and departed; and my heart within me laughed to see how my name and cunning counsel had beguiled them. But the Cyclops, groaning and travailing in pain, groped with his hands, and lifted away the stone from the door of the cave, and himself sat in the entry, with arms outstretched to catch, if he might, any one that was going forth with his sheep, so witless, methinks, did he hope to find me. But I advised me how all might be for the very best, if perchance I might find a way of escape from death for my companions and myself, and I wove all manner of craft and counsel, as a man will for his life, seeing

that great mischief was nigh. And this was the counsel that showed best in my sight. The rams of the flock were well nurtured and thick of fleece, great and goodly, with wool dark as the violet. Quietly I lashed them together with twisted withies, whereon the Cyclops slept, that lawless monster. Three together I took: now the middle one of the three would bear each a man, but the other twain went on either side, saving my fellows. Thus every three sheep bear their man. But as for me I laid hold of the back of a young ram who was far the best and the goodliest of all the flock, and curled beneath his shaggy belly there I lay, and so clung face upward, grasping the wondrous fleece with a steadfast heart. So for that time making moan we awaited the bright Dawn.

"So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, then did the rams of the flock hasten forth to pasture, but the ewes bleated unmilked about the pens, for their udders were swollen to bursting. Then their lord, sore stricken with pain, felt along the backs of all the sheep as they stood up before him, and guessed not in his folly how that my men were bound beneath the breasts of his thick-fleeced flocks. Last of all the sheep came forth the ram, cumbered with his wool, and the weight of me and my cunning. And the strong Polyphemus laid his hands on him and spake to him, saying:

"'Dear ram, wherefore, I pray thee, art thou the last of all the flocks to go forth from the cave, who of old wast not wont to lag behind the sheep, but wert ever the foremost to pluck the tender blossom of the pasture, faring with long strides, and wert still the first to come to the streams of the rivers, and first didst long to return to the homestead in the evening? But now art thou the very last. Surely thou art sorrowing for the eye of thy lord, which an evil man blinded, with his accursed fellows, when he had subdued my wits with wine, even Noman, whom I say hath not yet escaped destruction. Ah, if thou couldst feel as I, and be endued with speech, to tell me where he shifts about to shun my wrath; then should he be smitten, and his brains be dashed against the floor here and there about the cave, and my heart be lightened of the sorrows which Noman, nothing worth, hath brought me!'

"Therewith he sent the ram forth from him, and when we had gone but a little way from the cave and from the yard, first I loosened myself from under the ram and then I set my fellows free. And swiftly we drave on those stiff-shanked sheep, so rich in fat, and often turned to look about, till we came to the ship. And a glad sight to our fellows were we that had fled from death, but the others they would have bemoaned with tears; howbeit I suffered it not, but with frowning brows forbade each man to weep. Rather I bade them

to cast on board the many sheep with goodly fleece, and to sail over the salt sea water. So they embarked forthwith, and sate upon the benches, and sitting orderly smote the grey sea water with their oars. But when I had not gone so far but that a man's shout might be heard, then I spoke unto the Cyclops taunting him:

"'Cyclops, so thou wert not to eat the company of a weakling by main might in thy hollow cave! Thine evil deeds were very sure to find thee out, thou cruel man, who hadst no shame to eat thy guests within thy gates, wherefore Zeus hath requited thee, and the other gods.'

"So I spake, and he was yet the more angered at heart, and he brake off the peak of a great hill and threw it at us, and it fell in front of the dark-prowed ship. And the sea heaved beneath the fall of the rock, and the backward flow of the wave bare the ship quickly to the dry land, with the wash from the deep sea, and drave it to the shore. Then I caught up a long pole in my hands, and thrust the ship from off the land, and roused my company, and with a motion of the head bade them dash in with their oars, that so we might escape our evil plight. So they bent to their oars and rowed on. But when we had now made twice the distance over the brine, I would fain have spoken to the Cyclops, but my company stayed me on every side with soft words, saying:

" 'Foolhardy that thou art, why wouldst thou rouse a wild man to wrath, who even now hath cast so mighty a throw towards the deep and brought our ship back to land, yea and we thought that we had perished even there? If he had heard any of us utter sound or speech he would have crushed our heads and our ship timbers with a cast of a rugged stone, so mightily he hurls.'

"So spake they, but they prevailed not on my lordly spirit, and I answered him again from out an angry heart:

" 'Cyclops, if any one of mortal men shall ask thee of the unsightly blinding of thine eye, say that it was Odysseus that blinded it, the waster of cities, son of Laertes, whose dwelling is in Ithaca.'

"So I spake, and with a moan he answered me, saying:

" 'Lo now, in very truth the ancient oracles have come upon me. There lived here a soothsayer, a noble man and a mighty, Telemus, son of Eurymus, who surpassed all men in soothsaying, and waxed old as a seer among the Cyclôpes. He told me that all these things should come to pass in the aftertime, even that I should lose my eyesight at the hand of Odysseus. But I ever looked for some tall and goodly man to come hither, clad in great might, but behold now one that is a dwarf, a man of no worth and a weakling, hath

blinded me of my eye after subduing me with wine. Nay, come hither Odysseus, that I may set by thee a stranger's cheer, and speed thy parting hence, that so the Earth-shaker may vouchsafe it thee, for his son am I, and he avows him for my father. And he himself will heal me, if it be his will; and none other of the blessed gods or of mortal men.'

"Even so he spake, but I answered him, and said: 'Would God that I were as sure to rob thee of soul and life, and send thee within the house of Hades, as I am that not even the Earth-shaker will heal thine eye!'

"So I spake, and then he prayed to the lord Poseidon stretching forth his hands to the starry heaven: 'Hear me, Poseidon, girdler of the earth, god of the dark hair, if indeed I be thine, and thou avowest thee my sire,—grant that he may never come to his home, even Odysseus, waster of cities, son of Laertes, whose dwelling is in Ithaca; yet if he is ordained to see his friends and come unto his well-builded house, and his own country, late may he come in evil case, with the loss of all his company, in the ship of strangers, and find sorrow in his house.'

"So he spake in prayer, and the god of the dark locks heard him. And once again he lifted a stone, far greater than the first, and with one swing he hurled it, and he put forth a measureless strength, and cast it but a little space behind the dark-prowed ship, and all but struck

the end of the rudder. And the sea heaved beneath the fall of the rock, but the wave bare on the ship and drave it to the further shore.

"But when we had now reached that island, where all our other decked ships abode together, and our company were gathered sorrowing, expecting us evermore, on our coming thither we ran our ship ashore upon the sand, and ourselves too stept forth upon the sea beach. Next we took forth the sheep of the Cyclops from out the hollow ship, and divided them, that none through me might go lacking his proper share. But the ram for me alone my goodly-greaved company chose out, in the dividing of the sheep, and on the shore I offered him up to the Zeus, even to the son of Cronos, who dwells in the dark clouds, and is lord of all, and I burnt the slices of the thighs. But he heeded not the sacrifice, but was devising how my decked ships and my dear company might perish utterly. Thus for that time we sat the livelong day, until the going down of the sun, feasting on abundant flesh and sweet wine. And when the sun had sunk and darkness had come on, then we laid us to rest upon the sea beach. So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, I called to my company, and commanded them that they should themselves climb the ship and loose the hawsers. So they soon embarked and sat upon the benches, and sitting orderly smote the grey sea water with their oars.

"Thence we sailed onward stricken at heart, yet glad as men saved from death, albeit we had lost our dear companions."

BOOK X

Odysseus' entertainment by Æolus, of whom he received a fair wind for the present, and all the rest of the winds tied up in a bag; which, his men untying, flew out, and carried him back to Æolus, who refused to receive him. His adventure at Læstrygonia with Antiphates, where of twelve ships he lost eleven, men and all. How he went thence to the Isle of Ææa, where half of his men were turned by Circe into swine, and how he went himself, and by the help of Hermes recovered them and stayed with Circe a year.

"Then we came to the isle Æolian, where dwelt Æolus, son of Hippotas, dear to the deathless gods, in a floating island, and all about it is a wall of bronze unbroken, and the cliff runs up sheer from the sea. His twelve children too abide there in his halls, six daughters and six lusty sons. And they feast evermore by their dear father and their kind mother, and dainties innumerable lie ready to their hands. The king entreated me kindly for a whole month, and sought out each thing, Ilios and the ships of the Argives, and the return of the Achæans. So I told him all the tale in order duly. But when I in turn took the word and asked of my journey, and bade him send me on my way,

he too denied me not, but furnished an escort. He gave me a wallet, made of the hide of an ox of nine seasons old, which he let flay, and therein he bound the ways of all the noisy winds; for him the son of Cronos made keeper of the winds, either to lull or to rouse what blasts he will. And he made it fast in the hold of the ship with a shining silver thong, that not the faintest breath might escape. Then he sent forth the blast of the West Wind to blow for me, to bear our ships and ourselves upon our way; but this he was never to bring to pass, for we were undone through our own heedlessness.

"For nine whole days we sailed by night and day continually, and now on the tenth day my native land came in sight, and already we were so near that we beheld the folk attending the beacon fires. Then over me there came sweet slumber in my weariness, for all the time I was holding the sheet, nor gave it to any of my company, that so we might come quicker to our own country. Meanwhile my company held converse together, and said that I was bringing home for myself gold and silver, gifts from Æolus the high-hearted son of Hippotas. And thus would they speak looking each man to his neighbor:

" 'Lo now, how beloved he is and highly esteemed among all men, to the city and land of whomsoever he may come. Many are the goodly treasures he taketh

with him out of the spoil from Troy, while we who have fulfilled like journeying with him return homeward bringing with us but empty hands. And now Æolus hath given unto him these things freely in his love. Nay, come, let us quickly see what they are, even what wealth of gold and silver is in the wallet.'

"So they spake, and the evil counsel of my company prevailed. They loosed the wallet, and all the winds brake forth. And the violent blast seized my men, and bare them towards the high seas weeping, away from their own country; but as for me, I woke and communed with my great heart, whether I should cast myself from the ship and perish in the deep, or endure in silence and abide yet among the living. Howbeit I hardened my heart to endure, and muffling my head I lay still in the ship. But the vessels were driven by the evil storm-wind back to the isle Æolian, and my company made moan.

"There we stepped ashore and drew water, and my company presently took their midday meal by the swift ships. Now when we had tasted bread and wine, I took with me a herald and one of my company, and went to the famous dwelling of Æolus: and I found him feasting with his wife and children. So we went in and sat by the pillars of the door on the threshold, and they all marvelled and asked us:

" 'How hast thou come hither, Odysseus? What evil

god assailed thee? Surely we sent thee on thy way with all diligence, that thou mightest get thee to thine own country and thy home, and withersoever thou wouldest.'

"Even so they said, but I spake among them heavy at heart: 'My evil company hath been my bane, and sleep thereto remorseless. Come, my friends, do ye heal the harm, for yours is the power.'

"So I spake, beseeching them in soft words, but they held their peace. And the father answered, saying: 'Get thee forth from the island straightway, thou that art the most reprobate of living men. Far be it from me to help or to further that man whom the blessed gods abhor! Get thee forth, for lo, thy coming marks thee hated by the deathless gods.'

"Therewith he sent me forth from the house making heavy moan. Thence we sailed onwards stricken at heart. And the spirit of the men was spent beneath the grievous rowing by reason of our vain endeavour, for there was no more any sign of a wafting wind. So for the space of six days we sailed by night and day continually, and on the seventh we came to the steep stronghold of Lamos, Telepylos of the Læstrygons, where herdsman hails herdsman as he drives in his flock, and the other who drives forth answers the call. There might a sleepless man have earned a double wage the one as neat-herd,[1] the other shepherding

[1] [Cattle-herd.]

white flocks: so near are the outgoings of the night and of the day. Thither when we had come to the fair haven, whereabout on both sides goes one steep cliff unbroken, and jutting headlands over against each other stretch forth at the mouth of the harbour, and strait is the entrance; thereinto all the others steered their curved ships. Now the vessels were bound within the hollow harbour each hard by other, for no wave ever swelled within it, great or small, but there was a bright calm all around. But I alone moored my dark ship without the harbour, at the uttermost point thereof, and made fast the hawser to a rock. And I went up a craggy hill, a place of out-look, and stood thereon: thence there was no sign of the labour of men or oxen, only we saw the smoke curling upward from the land. Then I sent forth certain of my company to go and search out what manner of men they were who here live upon the earth by bread, choosing out two of my company and sending a third with them as herald. Now when they had gone ashore, they went along a long level road whereby wains were wont to draw down wood from the high hills to the town. And without the town they fell in with a damsel drawing water, the noble daughter of Læstrygonian Antiphates. She had come down to the clear-flowing spring Artacia, for thence it was custom to draw water to the town. So they stood by her and spake unto her, and asked who was king of that land, and who they were

he ruled over. Then at once she showed them the high-roofed hall of her father. Now when they had entered the renowned house, they found his wife therein: she was huge of bulk as a mountain peak and was loathly in their sight. Straightway she called the renowned Antiphates, her lord, from the assembly-place, and he contrived a pitiful destruction for my men. Forthwith he clutched up one of my company and made ready his mid-day meal, but the other twain sprang up and came in flight to the ships. Then he raised the war cry through the town, and the valiant Læstrygons at the sound thereof flocked together from every side, a host past number, not like men but like the Giants. They cast at us from the cliffs with great rocks, each of them a man's burden, and anon there arose from the fleet an evil din of men dying and ships shattered withal. And like folk spearing fishes they bare home their hideous meal. While as yet they were slaying my friends within the deep harbour, I drew my sharp sword from my thigh, and with it cut the hawsers of my dark-prowed ship. Quickly then I called to my company, and bade them dash in with the oars, that we might clean escape this evil plight. And all with one accord they tossed the sea water with the oar-blade in dread of death, and to my delight my barque flew forth to the high seas away from the beetling rocks, but those other ships were lost there, one and all.

"Thence we sailed onward stricken at heart, yet glad as men saved from death, albeit we had lost our dear companions. And we came to the isle Ææan, where dwelt Circe of the braided tresses, an awful goddess of mortal speech, own sister to the wizard Æætes. Both were begotten of Helios,[1] who gives light to all men, and their mother was Perse, daughter of Oceanus. There on the shore we put in with our ship into the sheltering haven silently, and some god was our guide. Then we stept ashore, and for two days and two nights lay there, consuming our own hearts for weariness and pain. But when now the fair-tressed Dawn had brought the full light of the third day, then did I seize my spear and my sharp sword, and quickly departing from the ship I went up unto a place of wide prospect, if haply I might see any sign of the labour of men and hear the sound of their speech. So I went up a craggy hill, a place of out-look, and I saw the smoke rising from the broadwayed earth in the halls of Circe, through the thick coppice and the woodland. Then I mused in my mind and heart whether I should go and make discovery, for that I had seen the smoke and flame. And as I thought thereon this seemed to me the better counsel, to go first to the swift ship and to the sea-banks, and give my company their midday meal, and then send them to make search. But as

[1] [The Sun.]

I came and drew nigh to the curved ship, some god even then took pity on me in my loneliness, and sent a tall antlered stag across my very path. He was coming down from his pasture in the woodland to the river to drink, for verily the might of the sun was sore upon him. And as he came up from out of the stream, I smote him on the spine in the middle of the back, and the brazen shaft went clean through him, and with a moan he fell in the dust, and his life passed from him. Then I set my foot on him and drew forth the brazen shaft from the wound, and laid it hard by upon the ground and let it lie. Next I broke withies and willow twigs, and wove me a rope a fathom in length, well twisted from end to end, and bound together the feet of the huge beast, and went to the black ship bearing him across my neck, and leaning on a spear, for it was in no wise possible to carry him on my shoulder with one hand, for he was a mighty quarry. And I threw him down before the ship and aroused my company with soft words, standing by each man in turn:

" 'Friends, for all our sorrows we shall not yet a while go down to the house of Hades, ere the coming of the day of destiny; go to then, while as yet there is meat and drink in the swift ship, let us take thought thereof, that we be not famished for hunger.'

"Even so I spake, and they speedily hearkened to my words. They unmuffled their heads, and there on the

shore of the unharvested sea gazed at the stag, for he was a mighty quarry. But after they had delighted their eyes with the sight of him, they washed their hands and got ready the glorious feast. So for that time we sat the livelong day till the going down of the sun, feasting on abundant flesh and sweet wine. When the sun sank and darkness had come on, then we laid us to rest upon the sea beach. So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, I called a gathering of my men and spake in the ears of them all:

" 'Hear my words, my fellows, despite your evil case. My friends, lo, now we know not where is the place of darkness or of dawning, nor where the Sun, that gives light to men, goes beneath the earth, nor where he rises; therefore let us advise us speedily if any counsel yet may be: as for me, I deem there is none. For I went up a craggy hill, a place of out-look, and saw the island crowned about the circle of the endless sea, the isle itself lying low; and in the midst thereof mine eyes beheld the smoke through the thick coppice and the woodland.'

"Even so I spake, but their spirit within them was broken, as they remembered the deeds of Antiphates the Læstrygonian, and all the evil violence of the haughty Cyclops, the man-eater. So they wept aloud shedding big tears. Howbeit no avail came of their weeping.

"Then I numbered my goodly-greaved company in

two bands, and appointed a leader for each, and I myself took the command of the one part, and god-like Eurylochus of the other. And anon we shook the lots in a brazen-fitted helmet, and out leapt the lot of proud Eurylochus. So he went on his way, and with him two and twenty of my fellowship all weeping; and we were left behind making lament. In the forest glades they found the halls of Circe builded, of polished stone, in a place with wide prospect. And all around the palace mountain-bred wolves and lions were roaming, whom she herself had bewitched with evil drugs that she gave them. Yet the beasts did not set on my men, but lo, they ramped about them and fawned on them, wagging their long tails. And as when dogs fawn about their lord when he comes from the feast, for he always brings them the fragments that soothe their mood, even so the strong-clawed wolves and the lions fawned around them; but they were affrighted when they saw the strange and terrible creatures. So they stood at the outer gate of the fair-tressed goddess, and within they heard Circe singing in a sweet voice, as she fared to and fro before the great web imperishable, such as is the handiwork of goddesses, fine of woof and full of grace and splendour. Then Polites, a leader of men, the dearest to me and the trustiest of all my company, first spake to them:

"'Friends, forasmuch as there is one within that

fares to and fro before a mighty web singing a sweet song, so that all the floor of the hall makes echo, a goddess she is or a woman; come quickly and cry aloud to her.'

"He spake the word and they cried aloud and called to her. And straightway she came forth and opened the shining doors and bade them in, and all went with her in their heedlessness. But Eurylochus tarried behind, for he guessed that there was some treason. So she led them in and set them upon chairs and high seats, and made them a mess of cheese and barley-meal and yellow honey with Pramnian wine, and mixed harmful drugs with the food to make them utterly forget their own country. Now when she had given them the cup and they had drunk it off, presently she smote them with a wand, and in the styes of the swine she penned them. So they had the head and voice, the bristles and the shape of swine, but their mind abode even as of old. Thus were they penned there weeping and Circe flung them acorns and mast and fruit of the cornel tree to eat, whereon wallowing swine do always batten.

"Now Eurylochus came back to the swift black ship to bring tidings of his fellows, and of their unseemly doom. Not a word could he utter, for all his desire, so deeply smitten was he to the heart with grief, and his eyes were filled with tears and his soul was fain

of lamentation. But when we all had pressed him with our questions in amazement, even then he told the fate of the remnant of our company.

"Then I cast about my shoulder my silver-studded sword, a great blade of bronze, and slung my bow about me and bade him lead me again by the way that he came. But he caught me with both hands, and by my knees he besought me, and bewailing him spake to me winged words:

" 'Lead me not thither against my will, oh fosterling of Zeus, but leave me here! For well I know thou shalt thyself return no more, nor bring any one of all thy fellowship; nay, let us flee the swifter with those that be here, for even yet may we escape the evil day.'

"On this wise he spake, but I answered him, saying: 'Eurylochus, abide for thy part here in this place, eating and drinking by the black hollow ship: but I will go forth, for a strong constraint is laid on me.'

"With that I went up from the ship and the sea shore. But lo, when in my faring through the sacred glades I was now drawing near to the great hall of the enchantress Circe, then did Hermes, of the golden wand, meet me as I approached the house, in the likeness of a young man with the first down on his lip, the time when the sun sank and darkness had come on, when youth is most gracious. So he clasped my hand and spake and hailed me:

"'Ah, hapless man, whither away again, all alone through the wolds, thou that knowest not this country? And thy company yonder in the hall of Circe are penned in the guise of swine, in their deep lairs abiding. Is it in hope to free them that thou art come hither? Nay, methinks, thou thyself shalt never return but remain there with the others. Come, then, I will redeem thee from thy distress, and bring deliverance. Lo, take this herb of virtue, and go to the dwelling of Circe, that it may keep from thy head the evil day. And I will tell thee all the magic sleight of Circe. She will mix thee a potion and cast drugs into the mess; but not even so shall she be able to enchant thee; so helpful is this charmed herb that I shall give thee, and I will tell thee all. When it shall be that Circe smites thee with her long wand, even then draw thou thy sharp sword from thy thigh, and spring on her, as one eager to slay her. And she will shrink away. But command her to swear a mighty oath by the blessed gods, that she will plan nought else of mischief to thine own hurt.'

"Therewith the slayer of Argos gave me the plant that he had plucked from the ground, and he showed me the growth thereof. It was black at the root, but the flower was like to milk. Moly the gods call it, but it is hard for mortal men to dig; howbeit with the gods all things are possible.

"Then Hermes departed toward high Olympus, up through the woodland isle, but as for me I held on my way to the house of Circe, and my heart was darkly troubled as I went. So I halted in the portals of the fair-tressed goddess; there I stood and called aloud and the goddess heard my voice, who presently came forth and opened the shining doors and bade me in, and I went with her heavy at heart. So she led me in and set me on a chair with studs of silver, a goodly carven chair, and beneath was a footstool for the feet. And she made me a potion in a golden cup, that I might drink, and she also put a charm therein, in the evil counsel of her heart. Now when she had given it and I had drunk it off and was not bewitched, she smote me with her wand and spake and hailed me:

" 'Go thy way now to the stye, couch thee there with the rest of thy company.'

"So spake she, but I drew my sharp sword from my thigh and sprang upon Circe, as one eager to slay her. But with a great cry she slipped under, and clasped my knees, and bewailing herself spake to me winged words:

" 'Who art thou of the sons of men, and whence? Where is thy city? Where are they that begat thee? I marvel to see how thou hast drunk of this charm, and wast nowise subdued. Nay, for there lives no man else that is proof against this charm, whoso hath drunk

thereof, and once it hath passed his lips. But thou hast, methinks, a mind within thee that may not be enchanted. Verily thou art Odysseus, ready at need, whom he of the golden wand, the slayer of Argos, full often told me was to come hither, on his way from Troy with his swift black ship. Nay, come, put thy sword into the sheath, that we may trust each the other.'

"So spake she, but I answered her, saying: 'Nay, Circe, how canst thou bid me be gentle to thee, who hast turned my company into swine within thy halls, except thou wilt deign, goddess, to swear a mighty oath, that thou wilt plan nought else of mischief to mine own hurt.'

"So I spake, and she straightway swore the oath not to harm me, as I bade her.

"Now all this while her handmaids busied them in the halls, four maidens that are her serving women in the house. They are born of the wells and of the woods and of the holy rivers, that flow forward into the salt sea. Of these one cast upon the chairs goodly coverlets of purple above and spread a linen cloth thereunder. And lo, another drew up silver tables to the chairs, and thereon set for them golden baskets. And a third mixed sweet honey-hearted wine in a silver bowl, and set out cups of gold. And a fourth bare water, and kindled a great fire beneath the mighty cauldron. So

the water waxed warm; but when it boiled in the bright brazen vessel, she set me in a bath and bathed me with water from out a great cauldron, pouring it over head and shoulders, when she had mixed it to a pleasant warmth, till from my limbs she took away the consuming weariness. Now after she had bathed me and anointed me well with olive oil, and cast about me a fair mantle and a doublet, she led me into the halls and set me on a chair with studs of silver, a goodly carven chair, and beneath was a footstool for the feet. And a handmaid bare water for the hands in a goodly golden ewer, and poured it forth over a silver basin to wash withal; and to my side she drew a polished table, and a grave dame bare wheaten bread and set it by me, and laid on the board many dainties, giving freely of such things as she had by her. And she bade me eat, but my soul found no pleasure therein. I sat with other thoughts, and my heart had a boding of ill.

"Now when Circe saw that I sat thus, and that I put not forth my hands to the meat and that I was mightily afflicted, she drew near to me and spake to me winged words:

"'Wherefore thus, Odysseus, dost thou sit there like a speechless man, consuming thine own soul, and dost not touch meat nor drink? Dost thou indeed deem there is some further guile? Nay, thou hast no cause

to fear, for already I have sworn thee a strong oath not to harm thee.'

"So spake she, but I answered her, saying: 'Oh, Circe, what righteous man would have the heart to taste meat and drink ere he had redeemed his company, and beheld them face to face? But if in good faith thou biddest me eat and drink, then let them go free, that mine eyes may behold my dear companions.'

"So I spake, and Circe passed out through the hall with the wand in her hand, and opened the doors of the stye, and drave them forth in the shape of swine of nine seasons old. There they stood before her, and she went through their midst, and anointed each one of them with another charm. And lo, from their limbs the bristles dropped away, wherewith the venom had erewhile clothed them, that lady Circe gave them. And they became men again, younger than before they were, and goodlier far, and taller to behold. And they all knew me again and each one took my hands, and wistful was the lament that sank into their souls, and the roof around rang wondrously. And even the goddess herself was moved with compassion.

"Then standing nigh me the fair goddess spake unto me: 'Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, depart now to thy swift ship and the sea-banks. And first of all, draw ye up the ship ashore, and bestow the goods in the caves and all the gear.

And thyself return again, and bring with thee thy dear companions.'

"So spake she, and my lordly spirit consented thereto. So I went on my way to the swift ship and the sea-banks, and there I found my dear company on the swift ship lamenting piteously, shedding big tears. And as when calves of the homestead gather round the droves of kine that have returned to the yard, when they have their fill of pasture, and all with one accord frisk before them, and the folds may no more contain them, but with a ceaseless lowing they skip about their dams, so flocked they all about me weeping, when their eyes beheld me. Yea, and to their spirit it was as though they had got to their dear country, and the very city of rugged Ithaca where they were born and reared.

"Meanwhile Circe bathed the rest of my company in her halls with all care, and anointed them well with olive oil; and cast thick mantles and doublets about them. And we found them all feasting nobly in the halls. And when they saw and knew each other face to face, they wept and mourned, and the house rang around. Then she stood near me, that fair goddess, and spake, saying:

" 'Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, no more now wake this plenteous weeping: myself I know of all the pains ye endured upon

the teeming deep, and the great despite done you by unkindly men upon the land. Nay, come, eat ye meat and drink wine, till your spirit shall return to you again, as it was when first ye left your own country of rugged Ithaca, but now are ye wasted and wanting heart, mindful evermore of your sore wandering, nor has your heart ever been merry, for very grievous hath been your trial.'

"So spake she, and our lordly spirit consented thereto. So there we sat day by day for the full circle of a year, feasting on abundant flesh and sweet wine. But when now a year had gone, and the seasons returned as the months waned, and the long days came in their course, then did my dear company call me forth, and say:

" 'Good sir, now it is high time to mind thee of thy native land, if it is ordained that thou shalt be saved, and come to thy lofty house and thine own country.'

"So spake they and my lordly spirit consented thereto. So for that time we sat the livelong day till the going down of the sun, feasting on abundant flesh and sweet wine. But when the sun sank and darkness came on, they laid them to rest throughout the shadowy halls.

"Then I besought Circe by her knees, and the goddess heard my speech, and uttering my voice I spake to her winged words: 'Circe, fulfill for me the promise

which thou madest me to send me on my homeward way. Now is my spirit eager to be gone, and the spirit of my company that wear away my heart as they mourn around me, when haply thou art gone from us.'

"So spake I, and the fair goddess answered me anon: 'Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, tarry ye now no longer in my house against your will; but first must ye perform another journey, and reach the dwelling of Hades and of dread Persephone[1] to seek the spirit of Theban Teiresias, the blind soothsayer, whose wits abide steadfast. To him Persephone hath given judgment, even in death, that he alone should have understanding; but the other souls sweep shadow-like around.'

"Thus spake she, but as for me, my heart was broken, and my soul had no more care to live and to see the sunlight. But when I had my fill of weeping and grovelling, then at the last I answered and spake unto her saying: 'And who, Circe, will guide us on this way? for no man ever yet sailed to hell in a black ship.'

"So spake I, and the fair goddess answered me anon: 'Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, nay, trouble not thyself for want of a guide, by thy ship abiding, but set up the mast and spread abroad the white sails and sit thee down; and the breeze of the North Wind will bear thy vessel on her

[1] [Goddess of the lower world.]

way. But when thou hast now sailed in thy ship across the stream Oceanus, where is a waste shore and the groves of Persephone, even tall poplar trees and willows that shed their fruit before the season, there beach thy ship by deep eddying Oceanus, but go thyself to the dank house of Hades. So, hero, draw nigh thereto, as I command thee, and dig a trench as it were a cubit in length and breadth, and about it pour a drink-offering to all the dead, first with mead and thereafter with sweet wine, and for the third time with water, and sprinkle white meal thereon; and entreat with many prayers the strengthless heads of the dead, and promise that on thy return to Ithaca thou wilt offer in thy halls a barren heifer, the best thou hast, and wilt fill the pyre with treasure, and wilt sacrifice apart, to Teiresias alone a black ram without spot, the fairest of your flock. But when thou hast with prayers made supplication to the lordly races of the dead, then offer up a ram and a black ewe, bending their heads towards Erebus and thyself turn thy back, with thy face set for the shore of the river. Then will many spirits come to thee of the dead that be departed. Thereafter thou shalt call to thy company and command them to flay the sheep which even now lie slain by the pitiless sword, and to consume them with fire, and to make prayer to the gods, to mighty Hades and to dread Persephone. And thyself draw the sharp sword from thy thigh

and sit there, suffering not the strengthless heads of the dead to draw nigh to the blood, ere thou hast word of Teiresias. Then the seer will come to thee quickly, leader of the people; he will surely declare to thee thy way and the measure of thy path, and as touching thy returning, how thou mayst go over the teeming deep.'

"So spake she, and anon came the golden-throned Dawn. Then she put on me a mantle and a doublet for raiment, and the nymph clad herself in a great shining robe, light of woof and gracious, and about her waist she cast a fair golden girdle, and put a veil upon her head. But I passed through the halls and roused my men with smooth words, standing by each one in turn:

" 'Sleep ye now no more nor breathe sweet slumber; but let us go on our way, for surely she hath shown me all, the lady Circe.'

"So spake I, and their lordly soul consented thereto. Yet even thence I led not my company safe away. There was one, Elpenor, the youngest of us all, not very valiant in war neither steadfast in mind. He was lying apart from the rest of my men on the housetop of Circe's sacred dwelling, very fain of the cool air, as one heavy with wine. Now when he heard the noise of the voices and of the feet of my fellows as they moved to and fro, he leaped up of a sudden and minded him not

to descend again by the way of the tall ladder, but fell right down from the roof, and his neck was broken from the bones of the spine, and his spirit went down to the house of Hades.

"Then I spake among my men, as they went on their way, saying: 'Ye deem now, I see, that ye are going to your own dear country; but Circe hath showed us another way, even to the dwelling of Hades and of dread Persephone, to seek to the spirit of Theban Teiresias.'

"Even so I spake, but their heart within them was broken, and they sat them down even where they were, and made lament and tore their hair. Howbeit no help came of their weeping.

"But as we were now wending sorrowful to the swift ship and the sea-banks, shedding big tears, Circe meanwhile had gone her ways and made fast a ram and a black ewe by the dark ship, lightly passing us by: who may behold a god against his will, whether going to or fro?"

BOOK XI

Odysseus descends into hell and discourses with the ghosts of the deceased heroes.

"Now when we had gone down to the ship and to the sea, first of all we drew the ship unto the fair

salt water, and placed the mast and sails in the black ship, and took those sheep and put them therein, and ourselves too climbed on board, sorrowing, and shedding tears. And in the wake of our dark-prowed ship she sent a favouring wind that filled the sails, a kindly escort, — even Circe of the braided tresses, a dread goddess of human speech. And we set in order all the gear throughout the ship and sat us down; and the wind and the helmsmen guided our barque. And all day long her sails were stretched in her seafaring; and the sun sank and all the ways were darkened.

"She came to the limits of the world, to the deep-flowing Oceanus. There is the land and the city of the Cimmerians, shrouded in mist and cloud, and never does the shining sun look down on them with his rays, neither when he climbs up the starry heavens, nor when again he turns earthward from the firmament, but deadly night is outspread over miserable mortals. Thither we came and ran the ship ashore and took out the sheep; but for our part we held on our way along the stream of Oceanus, till we came to the place which Circe had declared to us.

"There Perimedes and Eurylochus held the victims, but I drew my sharp sword from my thigh, and dug a pit, as it were a cubit in length and breadth, and about it poured a drink-offering to all the dead, first with mead and thereafter with sweet wine, and for the

third time with water. And I sprinkled white meal thereon, and entreated with many prayers the strengthless heads of the dead, and promised that on my return to Ithaca I would offer in my halls a barren heifer, the best I had, and fill the pyre with treasure, and apart unto Teiresias alone sacrifice a black ram without spot, the fairest of my flock. But when I had besought the tribes of the dead with vows and prayers, I took the sheep and cut their throats over the trench, and the dark blood flowed forth, and lo, the spirits of the dead that be departed gathered them from out of Erebus. Brides and youths unwed, and old men of many and evil days, and tender maidens with grief yet fresh at heart; and many there were, wounded with bronze-shod spears, men slain in flight with their bloody mail about them. And these many ghosts flocked together from every side about the trench with a wondrous cry, and pale fear gat hold on me. Then did I speak to my company and command them to flay the sheep that lay slain by the pitiless sword, and to consume them with fire, and to make prayer to the gods, to mighty Hades and to dread Persephone, and myself I drew the sharp sword from my thigh and sat there, suffering not the strengthless heads of the dead to draw nigh to the blood, ere I had word of Teiresias.

"And first came the soul of Elpenor, my companion, that had not yet been buried beneath the wide-wayed

earth; for we left the corpse behind us in the hall of Circe, unwept and unburied, seeing that another task was instant on us. At the sight of him I wept and had compassion on him, and uttering my voice spake to him winged words: 'Elpenor, how hast thou come beneath the darkness and the shadow? Thou hast come fleeter on foot than I in my black ship.'

"So spake I, and with a moan he answered me, saying: 'Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, an evil doom of some god was my bane and wine out of measure. When I laid me down on the housetop of Circe I minded me not to descend again by the way of the tall ladder, but fell right down from the roof, and my neck was broken off from the bones of the spine, and my spirit went down to the house of Hades. And now I pray thee in the name of those whom we left, who are no more with us, thy wife, and thy sire who cherished thee when as yet thou wert a little one, and Telemachus, whom thou didst leave in thy halls alone; forasmuch as I know that on thy way hence from out the dwelling of Hades, thou wilt stay thy well-wrought ship at the isle Ææan, even then, my lord, I charge thee to think on me. Leave me not unwept and unburied as thou goest hence, nor turn thy back upon me, lest haply I bring on thee the anger of the gods. Nay, burn me there with mine armour, all that is mine, and pile me

a barrow on the shore of the grey sea, the grave of a luckless man, that even men unborn may hear my story. Fulfill me this and plant upon the barrow mine oar, wherewith I rowed in the days of my life, while yet I was among my fellows.'

"Even so he spake, and I answered him, saying: 'All this luckless man, will I perform for thee and do.'

"Even so we twain were sitting holding sad discourse, I on the one side, stretching forth my sword over the blood, while on the other side the ghost of my friend told all his tale.

"Anon came up the soul of my mother dead, Anticlea, the daughter of Autolycus the great-hearted, whom I left alive when I departed from sacred Ilios. At the sight of her I wept, and was moved with compassion, yet even so, for all my sore grief, I suffered her not to draw nigh to the blood, ere I had word of Teiresias.

"Anon came the soul of Theban Teiresias, with a golden sceptre in his hand, and he knew me and spake unto me: 'Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, what seekest thou *now*, wretched man, wherefore hast thou left the sunlight and come hither to behold the dead and a land desolate of joy? Nay, hold off from the ditch and draw back thy sharp sword, that I may drink of the blood and tell thee sooth.'[1]

[1] [True prophecy.]

"So spake he and I put up my silver-studded sword into the sheath, and when he had drunk the dark blood, even then did the noble seer speak unto me, saying: 'Thou art asking of thy sweet returning, great Odysseus, but that will the god make hard for thee; for methinks thou shalt not pass unheeded by the Shaker of the Earth, who hath laid up wrath in his heart against thee, for rage at the blinding of his dear son. Yet even so, through many troubles, ye may come home, if thou wilt restrain thy spirit and the spirit of thy men so soon as thou shalt bring thy well-wrought ship nigh to the isle Thrinacia, fleeing the sea of violet blue, when ye find the herds of Helios grazing and his brave flocks, of Helios who overseeth all and overheareth all things. If thou doest these no hurt, being heedful of thy return, so may ye yet reach Ithaca, albeit in evil case. But if thou hurtest them, I foreshow ruin for thy ship and for thy men, and even though thou shalt thyself escape, late shalt thou return in evil plight, with the loss of all thy company, on board the ship of strangers, and thou shalt find sorrows in thy house, even proud men that devour thy living, while they woo thy godlike wife and offer the gifts of wooing. Yet I tell thee, on thy coming thou shalt avenge their violence. But when thou hast slain the wooers in thy halls, whether by guile, or openly with the edge of the sword, there-

after go thy way, taking with thee a shapen oar, till thou shalt come to such men as know not the sea, neither eat meat savoured with salt; yea, nor have they knowledge of ships of purple cheek, nor shapen oars which serve for wings to ships. And I will give thee a most manifest token, which cannot escape thee. In the day when another wayfarer shall meet thee and say that thou hast a winnowing fan on thy stout shoulder, even then make fast thy shapen oar in the earth and do goodly sacrifice to the lord Poseidon, even with a ram and a bull and a boar, the mate of swine, and depart for home and offer holy hecatombs to the deathless gods that keep the wide heaven, to each in order due. And from the sea shall thine own death come, the gentlest death that may be, which shall end thee foredone with smooth old age, and the folk shall dwell happily around thee. This that I say is sooth.'

"So spake he, and I answered him, saying: 'Teiresias, all these threads, methinks, the gods themselves have spun. But come, declare me this and plainly tell me all. I see here the spirit of my mother dead; lo, she sits in silence near the blood, nor deigns to look her son in the face nor speak to him! Tell me, prince, how may she know me again that I am he?'

"So spake I, and anon he answered me, and said: 'I will tell thee an easy saying, and will put it in thy

heart. Whomsoever of the dead that be departed thou shalt suffer to draw nigh to the blood, he shall tell thee sooth; but if thou shalt grudge any, that one shall go to his own place again.' Therewith the spirit of the prince Teiresias went back within the house of Hades, when he had told all his oracles. But I abode there steadfastly, till my mother drew nigh and drank the dark blood; and at once she knew me, and bewailing herself spake to me winged words:

"'Dear child, how didst thou come beneath the darkness and the shadow, thou that art a living man? Grievous is the sight of these things to the living, for between us and you are great rivers and dreadful streams; first Oceanus, which can nowise be crossed on foot, but only if one have a well-wrought ship. Art thou but now come hither with thy ship and thy company in thy long wanderings from Troy? and hast thou not yet reached Ithaca, nor seen thy wife in thy halls?'

"Even so she spake, and I answered her, and said: 'O my mother, necessity was on me to come down to the house of Hades to seek the spirit of Theban Teiresias. For not yet have I drawn near to the Achæan shore, nor yet have I set foot on mine own country, but have been wandering evermore in affliction, from the day that first I went with goodly Agamemnon to Ilios of the fair steeds, to do battle

with the Trojans. But come, declare me this and plainly tell it all. What doom overcome thee of death that lays men at their length? Was it a slow disease, or did Artemis the archer slay thee with the visitation of her gentle shafts? And tell me of my father and my son, that I left behind me; doth my honour yet abide with them, or hath another already taken it, while they say that I shall come home no more? And tell me of my wedded wife, of her counsel and her purpose, doth she abide with her son and keep all secure, or hath she already wedded the best of the Achæans?'

"Even so I spake and anon my lady mother answered me: 'Yea, verily, she abideth with steadfast spirit in thy halls; and wearily for her the nights wane always and the days in shedding of tears. But the fair honour that is thine no man hath yet taken; but Telemachus sits at peace on his demesne, and feasts at equal banquets, whereof it is meet that a judge partake, for all men bid him to their house. And thy father abides there in the field, and goes not down to the town, nor lies he on bedding or rugs or shining blankets, but all the winter he sleeps, where sleep the thralls in the house, in the ashes by the fire, and is clad in sorry raiment. But when the summer comes and the rich harvest-tide, his beds of fallen leaves are strewn lowly all about the knoll of his vineyard plot.

There he lies sorrowing and nurses his mighty grief for long desire of thy return, and old age withal comes heavy upon him. Yea and even so did I too perish and meet my doom. It was not the archer goddess of the keen sight, who slew me in my halls with the visitation of her gentle shafts, nor did any sickness come upon me, such as chiefly with a sad wasting draws the spirit from the limbs; nay, it was my sore longing for thee, and for thy counsels, great Odysseus, and for thy loving-kindness, that reft me of sweet life.'

"So spake she, and I mused in my heart and would fain have embraced the spirit of my mother dead. Thrice I sprang towards her, and was minded to embrace her; thrice she flitted from my hands as a shadow or even as a dream, and grief waxed ever the sharper at my heart. And uttering my voice I spake to her winged words:

" 'Mother mine, wherefore dost thou not abide me who am eager to clasp thee, that even in Hades we twain may cast our arms each about the other, and have our fill of chill lament? Is this but a phantom that the high goddess Persephone hath sent me, to the end that I may groan for more exceeding sorrow?'

"So spake I, and my lady mother answered me anon: 'Ah me, my child, of all men most ill-fated, Persephone, the daughter of Zeus, doth in no wise deceive thee, but even on this wise it is with mortals when they die.

For the sinews no more bind together the flesh and the bones, but the great force of burning fire abolishes these, so soon as the life hath left the white bones, and the spirit like a dream flies forth and hovers near. But haste with all thine heart toward the sunlight, and mark all this, that even hereafter thou mayest tell it to thy wife.'

"Straightway then I went to the ship, and bade my men mount the vessel, and loose the hawsers. So speedily they went on board, and sat upon the benches. And the wave of the flood bore the barque down the stream of Oceanus, we rowing first, and afterwards the fair wind was our convoy."

BOOK XII

Odysseus' passage by the Sirens, and by Scylla and Charybdis. The sacrilege committed by his men in the isle Thrinacia. The destruction of his ships and men. How he swam on a plank nine days together, and came to Ogygia, where he stayed seven years with Calypso.

"Now after the ship had left the stream of the river Oceanus, and was come to the wave of the wide sea, and the isle Ææan, where is the dwelling place of early Dawn and her dancing grounds, and the land of sunrising, upon our coming thither we beached the ship in the sand, and ourselves too stept ashore on the sea

beach. There we fell on sound sleep and awaited the bright Dawn.

"So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, I sent forth my fellows to the house of Circe to fetch the body of the dead Elpenor. And speedily we cut billets of wood and sadly we buried him, where the furthest headland runs out into the sea, shedding big tears. But when the dead man was burned and the arms of the dead, we piled a barrow and dragged up thereon a pillar, and on the topmost mound we set the shapen oar.

"Now all that task we finished, and our coming from out of Hades was not unknown to Circe, but she arrayed herself and speedily drew nigh, and her handmaids with her bare flesh and bread in plenty and dark red wine. And the fair goddess stood in the midst and spake in our ears, saying:

" 'Men overbold, who have gone alive into the house of Hades, to know death twice, while all men else die once for all. Nay, come, eat ye meat and drink wine here all day long; and with the breaking of the day ye shall set sail, and myself I will show you the path and declare each thing, that ye may not suffer pain or hurt through any grievous ill-contrivance by sea or on the land.'

"So spake she, and our lordly souls consented thereto. Thus for that time we sat the livelong day, until

the going down of the sun, feasting on abundant flesh and on sweet wine. Now when the sun sank and darkness came on, my company laid them to rest by the hawsers of the ship. Then she took me by the hand and led me apart from my dear company, and made me to sit down and laid herself at my feet, and asked all my tale. And I told her all in order duly. Then at the last the lady Circe spake unto me, saying:

"'Even so, now all these things have an end; do thou then hearken even as I tell thee, and the god himself shall bring it back to thy mind. To the Sirens first shalt thou come, who bewitch all men, whosoever shall come to them. Whoso draws nigh them unwittingly and hears the sound of the Sirens' voice, never doth he see wife or babes stand by him on his return, nor have they joy at his coming; but the Sirens enchant him with their clear song, sitting in the meadow, and all about is a great heap of bones of men, corrupt in death, and round the bones the skin is wasting. But do thou drive thy ship past, and knead honey-sweet wax, and anoint therewith the ears of thy company, lest any of the rest hear the song; but if thou thyself art minded to hear, let them bind thee in the swift ship hand and foot, upright in the mast-stead, and from the mast let rope-ends be tied, that with delight thou mayest hear the voice of the Sirens. And if thou shalt beseech thy company and bid them

to loose thee then let them bind thee with yet more bonds. But when thy friends have driven thy ship past these, I will not tell thee fully which path shall thenceforth be thine, but do thou thyself consider it, and I will speak to thee of either way. On the one side there are beetling rocks, and against them the great wave roars of dark-eyed Amphitrite. These, ye must know, are they the blessed gods call the Rocks Wandering. By this way even winged things may never pass, nay, not even the cowering doves that bear ambrosia to Father Zeus, but the sheer rock evermore takes away one even of these, and the Father sends in another to make up the tale. Thereby no ship of men ever escapes that comes thither, but the planks of ships and the bodies of men confusedly are tossed by the waves of the sea and the storms of ruinous fire.

" 'On the other part are two rocks, whereof the one reaches with sharp peak to the wide heaven, and a dark cloud encompasses it; this never streams away, and there is no clear air about the peak neither in summer nor in harvest tide. No mortal man may scale it or set foot thereon, not though he had twenty hands and feet. For the rock is smooth and sheer, as it were polished. And in the midst of the cliff is a dim cave turned to Erebus, towards the place of darkness, whereby ye shall even steer your hollow ship, noble Odysseus. Not with an arrow from a bow

might a man in his strength reach from his hollow ship into that deep cave. And therein dwelleth Scylla, yelping terribly. Her voice indeed is no greater than the voice of new-born whelp, but a dreadful monster is she, nor would any look on her gladly, not if it were a god that met her. Verily she hath twelve feet all dangling down, and six necks exceeding long, and on each a hideous head, and therein three rows of teeth set thick and close, full of black death. Up to her middle is she sunk far down in the hollow cave, but forth she holds her heads from the dreadful gulf, and there she fishes, swooping round the rock, for dolphins or sea-dogs, or whatso greater beast she may anywhere take, whereof the deep-voiced Amphitrite feeds countless flocks. Thereby no sailors boast that thy have fled scatheless ever with their ship, for with each head she carries off a man, whom she hath snatched from out the dark-prowed ship.

"'But that other cliff, Odysseus, thou shalt note, lying lower, hard by the first: thou couldst send an arrow across. And thereon is a great fig-tree growing, in fullest leaf, and beneath it mighty Charybdis sucks down black water, for thrice a day she spouts it forth, and thrice a day she sucks it down in terrible wise. Never mayest thou be there when she sucks the water, for none might save thee from thy bane, not even the Earth-shaker! But take heed and swiftly

drawing nigh to Scylla's rock drive the ship past, since of a truth it is far better to mourn six of thy company in the ship, than all in the selfsame hour.'

"So spake she, but I answered, and said unto her: 'Come, I pray thee, goddess, tell me true, if there be any means whereby I might escape from the deadly Charybdis and avenge me on that other, when she would prey upon my company.'

"So spake I, and that fair goddess answered me: 'Man overbold, lo, now again the deeds of war are in thy mind and the travail thereof. Wilt thou not yield thee even to the deathless gods? As for her, she is no mortal, but an immortal plague, dread, grievous, and fierce, and not to be fought with; and against her there is no defence; flight is the bravest way. For if thou tarry to do on thine armour by the cliff, I fear lest once again she sally forth and catch at thee with so many heads, and seize as many men as before. So drive past with all thy force, and call on Cratæis, mother of Scylla, which bore her for a bane to mortals. And she will then let her from darting forth thereafter.

" 'Then thou shalt come unto the isle Thrinacia; there are the many kine of Helios and his brave flocks feeding, seven herds of kine and as many goodly flocks of sheep, and fifty in each flock. If thou doest these no hurt, being heedful of thy return, truly ye may yet

reach Ithaca, albeit in evil case. But if thou hurtest them, I foreshow ruin for thy ship and for thy men, and even though thou shouldst thyself escape, late shalt thou return in evil plight with the loss of all thy company.'

"So spake she, and anon came the golden-throned Dawn. Then the fair goddess took her way up the island. But I departed to my ship and roused my men themselves to mount the vessel and loose the hawsers. And speedily they went aboard and sat upon the benches, and sitting orderly smote the grey sea water with their oars. And in the wake of our dark-prowed ship she sent a favouring wind that filled the sails, a kindly escort,—even Circe of the braided tresses, a dread goddess of human speech. And straightway we set in order the gear throughout the ship and sat us down and the wind and the helmsman guided our barque.

"Then I spake among my company with a heavy heart: 'Friends, forasmuch as it is not well that one or two alone should know of the oracles that Circe, the fair goddess, spake unto me, therefore will I declare them, that with foreknowledge we may die, or haply shunning death and destiny escape. First she bade us avoid the sound of the voice of the wondrous Sirens, and their field of flowers, and me only she bade listen to their voices. So bind ye me in a

hard bond, that I may abide unmoved in my place upright in the mast-stead, and from the mast let rope-ends be tied, and if I beseech and bid you to set me free, then do ye straiten me with yet more bonds."

"Thus I rehearsed these things one and all, and declared them to my company. Meanwhile our good ship quickly came to the island of the Sirens twain, for a gentle breeze sped her on her way. Then straightway the wind ceased, and lo, there was a windless calm, and some god lulled the waves. Then my company rose up and drew in the ship's sails, and stowed them in the hold of the ship, while they sat at the oars and whitened the water with their polished pine blades. But I with my sharp sword cleft in pieces a great circle of wax, and with my strong hands kneaded it. And soon the wax grew warm, for that my great might constrained it, and the beam of the lord Helios, son of Hyperion. And I anointed therewith the ears of all my men in their order, and in the ship they bound me hand and foot upright in the mast-stead, and from the mast they fastened rope-ends and themselves sat down, and smote the grey sea water with their oars. But when the ship was within the sound of a man's shout from the land, we fleeing swiftly on our way, the Sirens espied the swift ship speeding toward them, and they raised their clear-toned song:

"'Hither, come hither, renowned Odysseus, great glory of the Achæans, here stay thy barque, that thou mayest listen to the voice of us twain. For none hath ever driven by this way in his black ship, till he hath heard from our lips the voice sweet as the honey-comb, and hath had joy thereof and gone on his way the wiser. For, lo, we know all things, all the travail that in wide Troy-land the Argives and Trojans bare by the gods' designs, yea, and we know all that shall hereafter be upon the fruitful earth.'

"So spake they uttering a sweet voice, and my heart was fain to listen, and I bade my company unbind me, nodding at them with a frown, but they bent to their oars and rowed on. Then straight uprose Perimedes and Eurylochus and bound me with more cords and straitened me yet the more. Now when we had driven past them, nor heard we any longer the sound of the Sirens or their song, forthwith my dear company took away the wax wherewith I had anointed their ears and loosed me from my bonds.

"But so soon as we left that isle, thereafter presently I saw smoke and a great wave, and heard the sea roaring. Then for very fear the oars flew from their hands, and down the stream they all splashed, and the ship was holden there, for my company no longer plied with their hands the tapering oars. But I paced the ship and cheered on my men, as I stood by each one and spake smooth words:

"'Friends, forasmuch as in sorrow we are not all unlearned, truly this is no greater woe that is upon us than when the Cyclops penned us by main might in his hollow cave; yet even thence we made escape by my manfulness, even by my counsel and my wit, and some day I think that this adventure too we shall remember. Come now, therefore, let us all give ear to do according to my word. Do ye smite the deep surf of the sea with your oars, as ye sit on the benches, if peradventure Zeus may grant us to escape from and shun this death. And as for thee, helmsman, thus I charge thee, and ponder it in thine heart, seeing that thou wieldest the helm of the hollow ship. Keep the ship well away from this smoke and from the wave and hug the rocks, lest the ship, ere thou art aware, start from her course to the other side, and so thou hurl us into ruin.'

"So I spake, and quickly they hearkened to my words. But of Scylla I told them nothing more, a bane none might deal with, lest haply my company should cease from rowing for fear, and hide them in the hold. In that same hour I suffered myself to forget the hard behest of Circe, in that she bade me in no wise be armed; but I did on my glorious harness and caught up two long lances in my hands, and went on to the decking of the prow, for thence methought that Scylla of the rock would first be seen, who was

to bring woe on my company. Yet could I not spy her anywhere, and my eyes waxed weary for gazing all about toward the darkness of the rock.

"Next we began to sail up the narrow strait lamenting. For on the one hand lay Scylla, and on the other mighty Charybdis in terrible wise sucked down the salt sea water. As often as she belched it forth, like a cauldron on a great fire she would seethe up through all her troubled deeps, and overhead the spray fell on the tops of either cliff. But oft as she gulped down the salt sea water, within she was all plain to see through her troubled deeps, and the rock around roared horribly and beneath the earth was manifest swart with sand, and pale fear gat hold on my men. Toward her, then, we looked fearing destruction; but Scylla meanwhile caught from out my hollow ship six of my company, the hardiest of their hands and the chief in might. And looking into the swift ship to find my men, even then I marked their feet and hands as they were lifted on high, and they cried aloud in their agony, and called me by my name for that last time of all. Even as when a fisher on some headland lets down with a long rod his baits for a snare to the little fishes below, casting into the deep the horn of an ox of the homestead, and as he catches each flings it writhing ashore, so writhing were they borne upward to the cliff. And there she

devoured them shrieking in her gates, they stretching forth their hands to me in the dread death-struggle. And the most pitiful thing was this that mine eyes have seen of all my travail in searching out the paths of the sea.

"Now when we had escaped the Rocks and dread Charybdis and Scylla, thereafter we soon came to the fair island of the god; where were the goodly kine, broad of brow, and the many brave flocks of Helios Hyperion. Then while as yet I was in my black ship upon the deep, I heard the lowing of the cattle being stalled and the bleating of the sheep, and on my mind there fell the saying of the blind seer, Theban Teiresias, and of Circe of Ææa, who charged me verily straitly to shun the isle of Helios, the gladdener of the world. Then I spake out among my company in sorrow of heart:

" 'Hear my words, my men, albeit in evil plight, that I may declare unto you the oracles of Teiresias and of Circe of Ææa, who verily straitly charged me to shun the isle of Helios, the gladdener of the world. For there she said the most dreadful mischief would befall us. Nay, drive ye then the black ship beyond and past that isle.'

"So spake I, and their heart was broken within them. And Eurylochus straightway answered me sadly, saying:

"'Hardy art thou, Odysseus, of might beyond measure, and thy limbs are never weary; verily thou art fashioned all of iron, that sufferest not thy fellows, foredone with toil and drowsiness, to set foot on shore, where we might presently prepare us a good supper in this sea-girt island. But even as we are thou biddest us fare blindly through the sudden night, and from the isle go wandering on the misty deep. And strong winds, the bane of ships, are born of the night. How could a man escape from utter doom, if there chanced to come a sudden blast of the South Wind, or of the boisterous West, which mainly wreck ships, beyond the will of the gods, the lords of all? Howbeit for this present let us yield to the black night, and we will make ready our supper abiding by the swift ship, and in the morning we will climb on board, and put out into the broad deep.'

"So spake Eurylochus, and the rest of my company consented thereto. Then at the last I knew that some god was indeed imagining evil, and I uttered my voice and spake unto him winged words:

"'Eurylochus, verily ye put force upon me, being but one among you all. But come, swear me now a mighty oath, one and all, to the intent that if we light on a herd of kine or a great flock of sheep, none in the evil folly of his heart may slay any sheep or ox; but in quiet eat ye the meat which the deathless Circe gave.'

"So I spake, and straightway they swore to refrain as I commanded them. Now after they had sworn and done that oath, we stayed our well-builded ship in the hollow harbour near to a well of sweet water, and my company went forth from out the ship and deftly got ready supper. But when they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, thereafter they fell a-weeping as they thought upon their dear companions whom Scylla had snatched from out the hollow ship and so devoured. And deep sleep came upon them amid their weeping. And when it was the third watch of the night, and the stars had crossed the zenith, Zeus the cloud-gatherer roused against them an angry wind with wondrous tempest, and shrouded in clouds land and sea alike, and from heaven sped down the night. Now when early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, we beached the ship, and dragged it up within a hollow cave, where were the fair dancing grounds of the nymphs and the places of their session. Thereupon I ordered a gathering of my men and spake in their midst, saying:

"'Friends, forasmuch as there is yet meat and drink in the swift ship, let us keep our hands off those kine, lest some evil thing befall us. For these are the kine and the brave flocks of a dread god, even of Helios, who overseeth all and overheareth all things.

"So I spake, and their lordly spirit hearkened there-

to. Then for a whole month the South Wind blew without ceasing, and no other wind arose, save only the East and the South.

"Now so long as my company still had corn and red wine, they refrained them from the kine, for they were fain of life. But when the corn was now all spent from out the ship, and they went wandering with barbed hooks in quest of game, as needs they must, fishes and fowls, whatsoever might come to their hand, for hunger gnawed at their belly, then at last I departed up the isle, that I might pray to the gods, if perchance some one of them might show me a way of returning. And now when I had avoided my company on my way through the island, I laved my hands where was a shelter from the wind and prayed to all the gods that hold Olympus. But they shed sweet sleep upon my eyelids. And Eurylochus the while set forth an evil counsel to my company:

" 'Hear my words, my friends, though ye be in evil case. Truly every shape of death is hateful to wretched mortals, but to die of hunger and so meet doom is most pitiful of all. Nay, come, we will drive off the best of the kine of Helios and will do sacrifice to the deathless gods who keep wide heaven. And if we may yet reach Ithaca, our own country, forthwith will we rear a rich shrine to Helios Hyperion, and therein would we set many a choice offering. But if he be

somewhat wroth for his cattle with straight horns, and is fain to wreck our ship, and the other gods follow his desire, rather with one gulp at the wave would I cast my life away, than be slowly straitened to death in a desert isle.'

"So spake Eurylochus, and the rest of the company consented thereto. Forthwith they drave off the best of the kine of Helios that were nigh at hand, for the fair kine of shambling gait and broad of brow were feeding no great way from the dark-prowed ship. Then they stood around the cattle and prayed to the gods, plucking the fresh leaves from an oak of lofty boughs, for they had no white barley on board the decked ship. Now after they had prayed and cut the throats of the kine and flayed them, they cut out slices of the thighs and wrapped them in the fat, making a double fold, and thereon they laid raw flesh. Yet had they no pure wine to pour over the flaming sacrifices, but they made libation with water and roasted the entrails over the fire. Now after the thighs were quite consumed and they had tasted the inner parts, they cut the rest up small and spitted it on spits. In the same hour deep sleep sped from my eyelids and I sallied forth to the swift ship and the sea-banks. But on my way as I drew near to the curved ship, the sweet savour of the fat came all about me; and I groaned and spake out before the deathless gods:

" 'Father Zeus, and all ye other blessed gods that live for ever, verily to my undoing ye have lulled me with a ruthless sleep, and my company abiding behind have imagined a monstrous deed.'

"Then swiftly to Helios Hyperion came the nymph Lampetie of the long robes, with the tidings that we had slain his kine. And straight he spake with angry heart amid the Immortals:

" 'Father Zeus, and all ye other blessed gods that live for ever, take vengeance I pray you on the company of Odysseus, son of Laertes, that have insolently slain my cattle, wherein I was wont to be glad as I went toward the starry heaven, and when I again turned earthward from the firmament. And if they pay me not full atonement for the cattle, I will go down to Hades and shine among the dead.'

"And Zeus the cloud-gatherer answered him, saying: 'Helios, do thou, I say, shine on amidst the deathless gods, and amid mortal men upon the earth, the grain-giver. But as for me, I will soon smite their swift ship with my white bolt, and cleave it in pieces in the midst of the wine-dark deep.'

"But when I had come down to the ship and to the sea, I went up to my companions and rebuked them one by one; but we could find no remedy, the cattle were dead and gone. And soon thereafter the gods showed forth signs and wonders to my company. The

skins were creeping, and the flesh bellowing upon the spits, both the roast and raw, and there was a sound as the voice of kine.

"Then for six days my dear company feasted on the best of the kine of Helios which they had driven off. But when Zeus, son of Cronos, had added the seventh day thereto, thereafter the wind ceased to blow with a rushing storm, and at once we climbed the ship and launched into the broad deep, when we had set up the mast and hoisted the white sails.

"But now when we left that isle nor any other land appeared, but sky and sea only, even then the son of Cronos stayed a dark cloud above the hollow ship, and beneath it the deep darkened. And the ship ran on her way for no long while, for of a sudden came the shrilling West, with the rushing of a great tempest, and the blast of wind snapped the two forestays of the mast, and the mast fell backward and all the gear dropped into the bilge. And behold, on the hind part of the ship the mast struck the head of the pilot and brake all the bones of his skull together, and like a diver he dropt down from the deck, and his brave spirit left his bones. In that same hour Zeus thundered and cast his bolt upon the ship, and she reeled all over, being stricken by the bolt of Zeus, and was filled with sulphur, and lo, my company fell from out the vessel. Like sea-gulls they were borne round the

black ship upon the billows, and the god reft them of returning.

"But I kept pacing through my ship, till the surge loosened the sides from the keel, and the wave swept her along stript of her tackling, and brake her mast clean off at the keel. Now the backstay fashioned of an oxhide had been flung thereon; therewith I lashed together both keel and mast, and sitting thereon I was borne by the ruinous winds.

"Then verily the West Wind ceased to blow with a rushing storm, and swiftly withal the South Wind came, bringing sorrow to my soul, that so I might again measure back that space of sea, the way to deadly Charybdis. All the night was I borne, but with the rising of the sun I came to the rock of Scylla, and to dread Charybdis. Now she had sucked down her salt sea water, when I was swung up on high to the tall fig-tree whereto I clung like a bat, and could find no sure rest for my feet nor place to stand, for the roots spread far below and the branches hung aloft out of reach, long and large, and overshadowed Charybdis. Steadfast I clung till she should spew forth mast and keel again; and late they came to my desire. At the hour when a man rises up from the assembly and goes to supper, one who judges the many quarrels of the young men that seek him for law, at that same hour those timbers came forth to

view from out Charybdis. And I let myself drop down hands and feet, and plunged heavily in the midst of the waters beyond the long timbers, and sitting on these I rowed hard with my hands. But the father of gods and of men suffered me no more to behold Scylla, else I should never have escaped from utter doom.

"Thence for nine days was I borne, and on the tenth night the gods brought me nigh to the isle of Ogygia, where dwells Calypso of the braided tresses, an awful goddess of mortal speech, who took me in and entreated me kindly. But why rehearse all this tale? For even yesterday I told it to thee and to thy noble wife in thy house; and it liketh me not twice to tell a plain-told tale."

BOOK XIII

Odysseus, sleeping, is set ashore at Ithaca by the Phæacians, and waking knows it not. Pallas, in the form of a shepherd, helps to hide his treasure. The ship that conveyed him is turned into a rock, and Odysseus by Pallas is instructed what to do, and transformed into an old beggarman.

So spake he, and dead silence fell on all, and they were spell-bound throughout the shadowy halls. Thereupon Alcinoüs answered him, and spake, saying:

"Odysseus, now that thou hast come to my high house with floor of bronze, never, methinks, shalt thou

be driven from thy way ere thou returnest, though thou hast been sore afflicted. And for each man among you, that in these halls of mine drink evermore the dark wine of the elders, and hearken to the minstrel, this is my word and command. Garments for the stranger are already laid up in a polished coffer, with gold curiously wrought, and all other such gifts as the counsellors of the Phæacians bare hither. Come now, let us each of us give him a great tripod and a cauldron, and we in turn will gather goods among the people and get us recompense; for it were hard that one man should give without return."

So spake Alcinoüs, and the saying pleased them well. Then they went each one to his house to lay him down to rest; but so soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, they hasted to the ship and bare the bronze, the joy of men. And the mighty king Alcinoüs himself went about the ship and diligently bestowed the gifts beneath the benches, that they might not hinder any of the crew in their rowing, when they laboured at their oars. Then they betook them to the house of Alcinoüs and fell to feasting. And the mighty king Alcinoüs sacrificed before them an ox to Zeus, the son of Cronos, that dwells in the dark clouds, who is lord of all. And when they had burnt the pieces of the thighs, they shared the glorious feast and made merry, and among them harped the divine

minstrel Demodocus, whom the people honoured. But Odysseus would ever turn his head toward the splendour of the sun, as one fain to hasten his setting: for verily he was most eager to return. And as when a man longs for his supper, for whom all day long two dark oxen drag through the fallow field the jointed plough, yea and welcome to such an one the sunlight sinketh, that so he may get him to supper, for his knees wax faint by the way, even so welcome was the sinking of the sunlight to Odysseus. Then straight he spake among the Phæacians, masters of the oar, and to Alcinoüs in chief he made known his word, saying:

"My lord Alcinoüs, most notable of all the people, pour ye the drink offering, and send me safe upon my way, as for you, fare ye well. For now have I all that my heart desired, an escort and loving gifts. May the gods of heaven give me good fortune with them, and may I find my noble wife in my home with my friends unharmed, while ye, for your part, abide here and make glad your wedded wives and children; and may the gods vouchsafe all manner of good, and may no evil come nigh the people!"

So spake he, and they all consented thereto and bade send the stranger on his way, in that he had spoken aright. Then the mighty Alcinoüs spake to the henchman: "Pontonoüs, mix the bowl and serve out

the wine to all in the hall, that we may pray to Father Zeus, and send the stranger on his way to his own country."

So spake he, and Pontonoüs mixed the honey-hearted wine, and served it to all in turn. And they poured forth before the blessed gods that keep wide heaven, even there as they sat. Then goodly Odysseus uprose, and placed in Arete's hand the two-handled cup, and uttering his voice spake to her winged words:

"Fare thee well, O queen, all the days of thy life, till old age come and death, that visit all mankind. But I go homeward, and do thou in this thy house rejoice in thy children and thy people and Alcinoüs the king."

Therewith goodly Odysseus stept over the threshold. And with him the mighty Alcinoüs sent forth a henchman to guide him to the swift ship and the sea-banks. And Arete sent in his train certain maidens of her household, one bearing a fresh robe and a doublet, and another she joined to them to carry the strong coffer, and yet another bare bread and red wine. Now when they had come down to the ship and to the sea, straightway the good men of the escort took these things and laid them by in the hollow ship, even all the meat and drink. Then they strewed for Odysseus a rug and a sheet of linen, on the decks of the hollow ship in the hinder part thereof, that he might sleep

sound. Then he too climbed aboard and laid him down in silence, while they sat upon the benches, every man in order, and unbound the hawser from the pierced stone. So soon as they leant backwards and tossed the sea water with the oar blade, a deep sleep fell upon his eyelids, a sound sleep, very sweet, and next akin to death. And even as on a plain a yoke of four stallions comes springing all together beneath the lash, leaping high and speedily accomplishing the way, so leaped the stern of that ship, and the dark wave of the sounding sea rushed mightily in the wake, and she ran ever surely on her way, nor could a circling hawk keep pace with her, of winged things the swiftest. Even thus she lightly sped and cleft the waves of the sea, bearing a man whose counsel was as the counsel of the gods, one that erewhile had suffered much sorrow of heart, in passing through the wars of men, and the grievous waves; but for that time he slept in peace, forgetful of all that he had suffered.

So when the star came up, that is brightest of all, and goes ever heralding the light of early Dawn, even then did the seafaring ship draw nigh the island. There is in the land of Ithaca a certain haven of Phorcys, the ancient one of the sea, and thereby are two headlands of sheer cliff, which slope to the sea on the haven's side and break the mighty wave that ill winds roll without, but within, the decked ships ride

unmoored when once they have attained to that landing place. Now at the harbour's head is a long-leaved olive tree, and hard by is a pleasant cave and shadowy, sacred to the nymphs, that are called the Naiads. And therein are mixing bowls and jars of stone, and there moreover do bees hive. And there are great looms of stone, whereon the nymphs weave raiment of purple stain, a marvel to behold, and therein are waters welling evermore. Two gates there are to the cave, the one set toward the North Wind whereby men may go down, but the portals toward the South pertain rather to the gods, whereby men may not enter: it is the way of the immortals.

Thither they, as having knowledge of that place, let drive their ship; and now the vessel in full course ran ashore, half her keel's length high; so well was she sped by the hands of the oarsmen. Then they alighted from the benched ship upon the land, and first they lifted Odysseus from out the hollow ship, all as he was in the sheet of linen and the bright rug, and laid him yet heavy with slumber on the sand. And they took forth the goods which the lordly Phæacians had given him on his homeward way by grace of the great-hearted Athene. These they set in a heap by the trunk of the olive tree, a little aside from the road, lest some wayfaring man, before Odysseus awakened, should come and spoil them. Then themselves departed homeward

again. But the shaker of the earth forgat not the threats, wherewith at the first he had threatened godlike Odysseus, and he inquired into the counsel of Zeus, saying:

"Father Zeus, I for one shall no longer be of worship among the deathless gods, when mortal men hold me in no regard, even Phæacians, who moreover are of mine own lineage. Lo, now I said that after much affliction Odysseus should come home, for I had no mind to rob him utterly of his return, when once thou hadst promised it and given assent; but behold, in his sleep they have borne him in a swift ship over the sea, and set him down in Ithaca, and given him gifts out of measure, bronze and gold in plenty and woven raiment, much store, such as never would Odysseus have won for himself out of Troy; yea, though he had returned unhurt with the share of the spoil that fell to him."

And Zeus, the cloud gatherer, answered him, saying: "Lo now, shaker of the earth, of widest power, what a word hast thou spoken! The gods nowise dishonour thee; hard would it be to bring into dishonour our eldest and our best. But if any man, giving place to his own hardihood and strength, holds thee not in worship, thou hast always thy revenge for the same, even in the time to come. Do thou as thou wilt, and as seems to thee good."

Then Poseidon, shaker of the earth, answered him: "Lightly would I have done as thou sayest, O god of the dark clouds: but always do I hold in awe and avoid thy wrath. Howbeit, now I fain would smite a fair ship of the Phæacians, as she comes home from a convoy on the misty deep, that thereby they may learn to hold their hands, and cease from giving escort to men; and I would overshadow their city with a great mountain."

And Zeus, the gatherer of the clouds, answered him saying: "Friend, learn now what seems best in my sight. At an hour when the folk are all looking forth from the city at the ship upon her way, smite her into a stone hard by the land; a stone in the likeness of a swift ship, that all mankind may marvel, and do thou overshadow their city with a great mountain."

Now when Poseidon, shaker of the earth, heard this saying, he went on his way to Scheria, where the Phæacians dwell. There he abode awhile; and lo, she drew near, the sea-faring ship, lightly sped upon her way. Then nigh her came the shaker of the earth, and he smote her into a stone, and rooted her far below with the down-stroke of his hand; and he departed thence again. Then one to the other they spake winged words, the Phæacians of the long oars, mariners renowned. And thus would they speak, looking each man to his neighbour:

"Ah me! who is this that hath bound our swift ship on the deep as she drave homeward? Even now she stood all plain to view."

Even so they would speak; but they knew not how these things were ordained. And Alcinoüs made harangue and spake among them:

"Lo now, in very truth the ancient oracles of my father have come home to me. He was wont to say that Poseidon was jealous of us, for that we give safe escort to all men. He said that the day would come when the god would smite a fair ship of the Phæacians, as she came home from a convoy on the misty deep, and overshadow our city with a great mountain. Thus that ancient one would speak; and lo, all these things now have an end. But come, let us all give ear and do according to my word. Cease ye from the convoy of mortals, whensoever any shall come unto our town, and let us sacrifice to Poseidon twelve choice bulls, if perchance he may take pity, neither overshadow our city with a great mountain."

So spake he, and they were dismayed and got ready the bulls. Thus were they praying to the lord Poseidon, the princes and counsellors of the land of the Phæacians, as they stood about the altar.

Even then the goodly Odysseus awoke where he slept on his native land; nor knew he the same again, having now been long afar, for around him the god-

dess had shed a mist, even Pallas Athene, daughter of Zeus, to the end that she might make him undiscovered for that he was, and might expound to him all things, that so his wife should not know him, neither his townsmen and kinsfolk, ere the wooers had paid for all their transgressions. Wherefore each thing showed strange to the lord of the land, the long paths and the sheltering havens and the steep rocks and the trees in their bloom. So he started up, and stood and looked upon his native land, and then he made moan withal, and smote on both his thighs with the down-stroke of his hands, and making lament, he spake, saying:

"Oh, woe is me, unto what mortals' land am I now come? Say, are they froward, and wild, and unjust, or hospitable and of a god-fearing mind? Whither shall I bear all this wealth? Yea, where shall I myself go wandering? Oh! that it had abided with the Phæacians where it was, and that I had gone to some other of the mighty princes, who would have entreated me kindly and sent me on my way. But now I know not where to bestow my treasure, and yet I will not leave it here behind, lest haply other men make spoil of it. Lo now, they were not wholly wise or just, the princes and counsellors of the Phæacians, who carried me to a strange land. Verily they promised to bring me to clear-seen Ithaca, but they performed it not. May Zeus requite them, the god of suppliants,

seeing that he watches over all men and punishes the transgressor! But come, I will reckon up these goods and look to them, lest the men be gone, and have taken back of their gifts upon their hollow ship."

Therewith he set to number the fair tripods and the cauldrons and the gold and the goodly woven raiment; and of all these he lacked not aught, but he bewailed him for his own country, as he walked downcast by the shore of the sounding sea, and made sore lament. Then Athene came nigh him in the guise of a young man, the herdsman of a flock, a young man most delicate, such as are the sons of kings. And she had a well-wrought mantle that fell in two folds about her shoulders, and beneath her smooth feet she had sandals bound, and a javelin in her hands. And Odysseus rejoiced as he saw her, and came over against her, and uttering his voice spake to her winged words:

"Friend, since thou art the first that I have chanced on in this land, hail to thee, and with no ill-will mayest thou meet me! Nay, save this substance and save me too, for to thee as to a god I make prayer, and to thy dear knees have I come. And herein tell me true, that I may surely know. What land, what people is this? What men dwell therein? Surely, methinks, it is some clear-seen isle, or a shore of the rich mainland that lies and leans upon the deep."

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake to him again: "Thou art witless, stranger, or thou art come from afar, if indeed thou askest of this land; nay, it is not so very nameless but that many men know it, both all those who dwell toward the dawning and the sun, and they that abide over against the light toward the shadowy west. Verily it is rough and not fit for the driving of horses, yet is it not a very sorry isle, though narrow withal. For herein is corn past telling, and herein too wine is found, and the rain is on it evermore, and the fresh dew. And it is good for feeding goats and feeding kine; all manner of wood is here, and watering places unfailing are herein. Wherefore, stranger, the name of Ithaca hath reached even unto Troyland, which men say is far from this Achaean shore."

So spake she, and the steadfast goodly Odysseus was glad, and had joy in his own country, according to the word of Pallas Athene, daughter of Zeus, lord of the ægis. And he uttered his voice and spake unto her winged words; yet he did not speak the truth, but wrested the word into guile, for he had a gainful and a nimble wit within his breast:

"Of Ithaca have I heard tell, even in broad Crete, far over the seas; and now have I come hither myself with these my goods. And I left as much again to my children, when I turned outlaw for the slaying of the

dear son of Idomeneus, Orsilochus, swift of foot, who in wide Crete was the swiftest of all men that live by bread. Now he would have despoiled me of all that booty of Troy, for the which I had endured pain of heart, in passing through the wars of men, and the grievous waves of the sea, for this cause that I would not do a favour to his father, and make me his squire in the land of the Trojans, but commanded other fellowship of mine own. So I smote him with a bronze-shod spear as he came home from the field, lying in ambush for him by the wayside, with one of my companions. And dark midnight held the heavens, and no man marked us, but privily I took his life away. Now after I had slain him with the sharp spear, straightway I went to a ship and besought the lordly Phœnicians, and gave them spoil to their hearts' desire. I charged them to take me on board, and land me at Pylos or at goodly Elis where the Epeans bear rule. Howbeit of a truth, the might of the wind drave them out of their course, sore against their will, nor did they wilfully play me false. Thence we were driven wandering, and came hither by night. And with much ado we rowed onward into harbour, nor took we any thought of supper, though we stood sore in need thereof, but even as we were we stept ashore and all lay down. Then over me there came sweet slumber in my weariness, but they took forth my

goods from the hollow ship, and set them by me where I myself lay upon the sands. Then they went on board, and departed for the fair-lying land of Sidon; while as for me I was left stricken at heart."

So spake he and the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, smiled, and caressed him with her hand; and straightway she changed to the semblance of a woman, fair and tall, and skilled in splendid handiwork. And uttering her voice she spake unto him winged words:

"Crafty must he be, and knavish, who would outdo thee in all manner of guile, even if it were a god encountered thee. Hardy man, subtle of wit, of guile insatiate, so thou wast not even in thine own country to cease from thy sleights and knavish words, which thou lovest from the bottom of thine heart! But come, no more let us tell of these things, being both of us practised in deceits, for that thou art of all men far the first in counsel and in discourse, and I in the company of all the gods win renown for my wit and wile. Yet thou knewest not me, Pallas Athene, daughter of Zeus, who am always by thee and guard thee in all adventures. Yea, and I made thee to be beloved of all the Phæacians. And now am I come hither to contrive a plot with thee and to hide away the goods, that by my counsel and design the noble Phæacians gave thee on thy homeward way. And I would tell thee how great a measure of trouble thou art ordained

to fulfil within thy well-builded house. But do thou harden thy heart, for so it must be, and tell none neither man nor woman of all the folk, that thou hast indeed returned from wandering, but in silence endure much sorrow, submitting thee to the despite of men."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her, saying: "Hard is it, goddess, for a mortal man that meets thee to discern thee, howsoever wise he be; for thou takest upon thee every shape. But this I know well, that of old thou wast kindly to me, so long as we sons of the Achæans made war in Troy. But so soon as we had sacked the steep city of Priam and had gone on board our ships, and the god had scattered the Achæans, thereafter I have never beheld thee, daughter of Zeus, nor seen thee coming on board my ship, to ward off sorrow from me. But I wandered evermore with a stricken heart, till the gods delivered me from my evil case, even till the day when, within the fat land of the men of Phæacia, thou didst comfort me with thy words, and thyself didst lead me to their city. And now I beseech thee in thy father's name to tell me; for I deem not that I am come to clear-seen Ithaca, but I roam over some other land, and methinks that thou speakest thus to mock me and beguile my mind. Tell me whether in very deed I am come to mine own dear country."

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, answered him: "Yea, such a thought as this is ever in thy breast. Wherefore I may in no wise leave thee in all thy grief, so wary art thou, so ready of wit and so prudent. Right gladly would any other man on his return from wandering have hasted to behold his children and his wife in his halls; but thou hast no will to learn or to hear aught, till thou hast furthermore made trial of thy wife, who sits as ever in her halls, and wearily for her the nights wane always and the days, in shedding of tears. But of this I never doubted, but ever knew it in my heart that thou wouldest come home with the loss of all thy company. Yet, I tell thee, I had no mind to be at strife with Poseidon, my own father's brother, who laid up wrath in his heart against thee, being angered at the blinding of his dear son. But come, and I will show thee the place of the dwelling of Ithaca, that thou mayest be assured. Lo, here is the haven of Phorcys, the ancient one of the sea, and here at the haven's head is the olive tree with spreading leaves, and hard by it is the pleasant cave and shadowy, sacred to the nymphs that are called the Naiads. Yonder, behold, is the roofed cavern, where thou offeredst many an acceptable sacrifice of hecatombs to the nymphs; and lo, this hill is Neriton, all clothed in forest."

Therewith the goddess scattered the mist, and the

land appeared. Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus was glad, rejoicing in his own land, and he kissed the earth, the grain-giver.

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake to him again: "Be of good courage. Come, let us straightway set thy goods in the secret place of the wondrous cave, that there they may abide for thee safe. And let us for ourselves advise us how all may be for the very best." Therewith the goddess plunged into the shadowy cave, searching out the chambers of the cavern. Meanwhile Odysseus brought up his treasure, the gold and the unyielding bronze and fair woven raiment, which the Phæacians gave him. And these things he laid by with care, and Pallas Athene, daughter of Zeus, lord of the ægis, set a stone against the door of the cave. Then they twain sat down by the trunk of the sacred olive tree, and devised death for the froward wooers. And the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, spake first, saying:

"Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, advise thee how thou mayest stretch forth thine hands upon the shameless wooers, who now these three years lord it through thy halls, as they woo thy godlike wife and proffer the gifts of wooing. And she, that is ever bewailing her for thy return, gives hope to all and makes promises to every man and sends them messages, but her mind is set on other things."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her, saying:

"Lo now, in very truth I was like to have perished in my halls by the evil doom of Agamemnon, son of Atreus, hadst not thou, goddess, declared me each thing aright. Come, then, weave some counsel whereby I may requite them; and thyself stand by me, and put great boldness of spirit within me, even as in the day when we loosed the shining coronal[1] of Troy. If but thou wouldest stand by me with such eagerness, thou grey-eyed goddess, I would war even with three hundred men, with thee my lady and goddess, if thou of thy grace didst succour me the while."

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, answered him: "Yea, verily I will be near thee nor will I forget thee, whensoever we come to this toil: and methinks that certain of the wooers that devour thy livelihood shall bespatter the boundless earth with blood and brains. But come, I will make thee such-like that no man shall know thee. Thy fair skin I will wither on thy supple limbs, and make waste thy yellow hair from off thy head, and wrap thee in a foul garment, such that one would shudder to see a man therein. And I will dim thy two eyes, erewhile so fair, in such wise that thou mayest be unseemly in the sight of all the wooers and of thy wife and son, whom thou didst leave in thy

[1] [The battlements.]

halls. And do thou thyself first of all go unto the swineherd, who tends thy swine, and is loyal to thee as of old, and loves thy son and constant Penelope. Him shalt thou find sitting by the swine, as they are feeding near the rock of Corax and the spring Arethusa, and there they eat abundance of acorns and drink the black water, things that make in good case the rich flesh of swine. There do thou abide and sit by the swine, and find out all, till I have gone to Sparta, the land of fair women, to call Telemachus thy dear son, Odysseus, who hath betaken himself to spacious Lacedæmon, to the house of Menelaüs to seek tidings of thee, whether haply thou art yet alive."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her, saying: "Nay wherefore then didst thou not tell him, seeing thou hast knowledge of all? Was it, perchance, that he too may wander in sorrow over the unharvested seas, and that others may consume his livelihood?"

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, answered him: "Nay, let him not be heavy on thy heart. I myself was his guide, that by going thither he might win a good report. Lo, he knows no toil, but he sits in peace in the palace of the son of Atreus, and has boundless store about him. Truly, the young men with their black ship they lie in wait, and are eager to slay him ere he come to his own country. But this, methinks, shall never be. Yea, sooner shall the earth close over

certain of the wooers that devour thy livelihood."

Therewith Athene touched him with her wand. His fair flesh she withered on his supple limbs, and made waste his yellow hair from off his head, and over all his limbs she cast the skin of an old man, and dimmed his two eyes, erewhile so fair. And she changed his raiment to a vile wrap and a doublet, torn garments and filthy, stained with foul smoke. And over all she clad him with the great bald hide of a swift stag, and she gave him a staff and a mean tattered scrip, and a cord therewith to hang it.

And after they twain had taken this counsel together, they parted; and she now went to goodly Lacedæmon to fetch the son of Odysseus.

BOOK XIV

Odysseus, in the form of a beggar, goes to Eumæus, the master of his swine, where he is well used and tells a feigned story, and informs himself of the behavior of the wooers.

But Odysseus fared forth from the haven by the rough track, up the wooded country and through the heights, where Athene had shown him that he should find the goodly swineherd, who cared most for his substance of all the thralls that goodly Odysseus had gotten.

Now he found him sitting at the front entry of the house, where his courtyard was builded high, in a place with wide prospect; a great court it was and a fair, with free range round it. This the swineherd had builded by himself for the swine of his lord who was afar, and his mistress and the old man Laertes knew not of it. With stones dragged thither had he builded it, and coped it with a fence of white thorn, and he had split an oak to the dark core, and without he had driven stakes the whole length thereof on either side, set thick and close; and within the courtyard he made twelve styes hard by one another to be beds for the swine, and in each stye fifty grovelling swine were penned, brood swine; but the boars slept without. Now these were far fewer in number, the godlike wooers minishing them at their feasts, for the swineherd ever sent in the best of all the fatted hogs. And their tale was three hundred and three-score. And by them always slept four dogs, as fierce as wild beasts, which the swineherd had bred, a master of men. Now he was fitting sandals to his feet, cutting a good brown oxhide, while the rest of his fellows, three in all, were abroad this way and that, with the droves of swine; while the fourth he had sent to the city to take a boar to the proud wooers, as needs he must, that they might sacrifice it and satisfy their soul with flesh.

And of a sudden the baying dogs saw Odysseus, and

they ran at him yelping, but Odysseus in his wariness sat him down, and let the staff fall from his hand. There by his own homestead would he have suffered foul hurt, but the swineherd with quick feet hasted after them, and sped through the outer door, and let the skin fall from his hand. And the hounds he chid and drave them this way and that, with a shower of stones, and he spake unto his lord, saying:

"Old man, truly the dogs went nigh to be the death of thee all of a sudden, so shouldest thou have brought shame on me. Yea, and the gods have given me other pains and griefs enough. Here I sit, mourning and sorrowing for my godlike lord, and foster the fat swine for others to eat, while he in lack of food, it may be, wanders over some land and city of men of a strange speech, if haply he yet lives and beholds the sunlight. But come with me, let us to the inner steading, old man, that when thy heart is satisfied with bread and wine, thou too mayest tell thy tale and declare whence thou art, and how many woes thou hast endured."

Therewith the goodly swineherd led him to the steading, and took him in and set him down and strewed beneath him thick brushwood, and spread thereon the hide of a shaggy wild goat, wide and soft, which served himself for a mattress. And Odysseus rejoiced that he had given him such welcome, and spake and hailed him:

"May Zeus, O stranger, and all the other deathless gods grant thee thy dearest wish, since thou hast received me heartily!"

Then, O swineherd Eumæus, didst thou answer him, saying: "Guest of mine, it were an impious thing for me to slight a stranger, even if there came a meaner man than thou; for from Zeus are all strangers and beggars; and a little gift from such as we, is dear; for this is the way with thralls, who are ever in fear when young lords like ours bear rule over them. For surely the gods have stayed the returning of my master, who would have loved me diligently, and given me somewhat of my own, a house and a parcel of ground, and a comely wife, such as a kind lord gives to his man, who hath laboured much for him and the work of whose hands God hath likewise increased, even as he increaseth this work of mine whereat I abide. Therefore would my lord have rewarded me greatly, had he grown old at home. But he hath perished, as I would that all the stock of Helen had perished utterly, forasmuch as she hath caused the loosening of many a man's knees. For he too departed to Ilios of the goodly steeds, to get atonement for Agamemnon, that so he might war with the Trojans."

Therewith he quickly bound up his doublet with his girdle, and went his way to the styes, where the tribes of the swine were penned. Thence he took and

brought forth two, and sacrificed them both, and singed them and cut them small, and spitted them. And when he had roasted all, he bare and set it by Odysseus, all hot as it was upon the spits, and he sprinkled thereupon white barley-meal. Then in a bowl of ivywood he mixed the honey-sweet wine, and himself sat over against him and bade him fall to:

"Eat now, stranger, such fare as thralls have to hand, even flesh of sucking pigs; but the fatted hogs the wooers devour, for they know not the wrath of the gods nor any pity. For every day and every night that comes from Zeus, they make sacrifice not of one victim only, nor of two, and wine they draw and waste it riotously. For surely his livelihood was great past telling, no lord in the dark mainland had so much, nor any in Ithaca itself; nay, not twenty men together have wealth so great, and I will tell thee the sum thereof. Twelve herds of kine upon the mainland, as many flocks of sheep, as many droves of swine, as many ranging herds of goats, that his own shepherds and strangers pasture. And ranging herds of goats, eleven in all, graze here by the extremity of the island with trusty men to watch them. And day by day each man of these ever drives one of the flock to the wooers, whichsoever seems the best of the fatted goats. But as for me I guard and keep these swine and I choose out for them, as well as I may, the best of the swine and send it hence."

So spake he, but Odysseus ceased not to eat flesh and drink wine right eagerly and in silence, and the while was sowing seeds of evil for the wooers. Now when he had well eaten and comforted his heart with food, then the herdsman filled him the bowl out of which he was wont himself to drink, and he gave it him brimming with wine, and he took it and was glad at heart, and uttering his voice spake to him winged words:

"My friend, who was it then that bought thee with his wealth, a man so exceeding rich and mighty as thou declarest? Thou saidest that he perished to get atonement for Agamemnon; tell me, if perchance I may know him, being such an one as thou sayest. For Zeus, methinks, and the other deathless gods know whether I have seen him and may bring tidings of him; for I have wandered far."

Then the swineherd, a master of men, answered him: "Old man, no wanderer who came hither and brought tidings of him could win the ear of his wife and his dear son; but lightly do vagrants lie when they need entertainment, and care not to tell truth. Whosoever comes straying to the land of Ithaca, goes to my mistress and speaks words of guile. And she receives him kindly and lovingly and inquires of all things, and the tears fall from her eyelids for weeping, as is meet for a woman when her lord hath died afar.

And quickly enough wouldst thou too, old man, forge a tale, if any would but give thee a mantle and a doublet for raiment. But as for him, dogs and swift fowls are like already to have torn his skin from the bones, and his spirit hath left him. Or the fishes have eaten him in the deep, and there lie his bones swathed in sand-drift on the shore. Yonder then hath he perished, but for his friends nought is ordained but care, for all, but for me in chief. For never again shall I find a lord so gentle, how far soever I may go, not though again I attain unto the house of my father and my mother, where at first I was born, and they nourished me themselves and with their own hands they reared me. Nor henceforth it is not for these that I sorrow so much though I long to behold them with mine eyes in mine own country, but desire takes hold of me for Odysseus who is afar. His name, stranger, even though he is not here, it shameth me to speak, for he loved me exceedingly, and cared for me at heart; nay, I call him 'worshipful,' albeit, he is far hence."

Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus spake to him again: "My friend, forasmuch as thou utterly beliest me, and sayest that henceforth he will not come again, and thine heart is ever slow to believe, therefore will I tell thee not lightly but with an oath, that Odysseus shall return. And let me have the wages of good tidings as soon as ever he in his journeying shall come

hither to his home. Then clothe me in a mantle and a doublet, goodly raiment. But ere that, albeit I am sore in need I will not take aught, for hateful to me even as the gates of hell, is that man, who under stress of poverty speaks words of guile. Now be Zeus my witness before any god, and the hospitable board and the hearth of noble Odysseus whereunto I am come, that all these things shall surely be accomplished even as I tell thee. In this same year Odysseus shall come hither; as the old moon wanes and the new is born shall he return to his home, and shall take vengeance on all who here dishonour his wife and noble son."

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumæus: "Old man, it is not I, then, that shall ever pay thee these wages of good tidings, nor henceforth shall Odysseus ever come to his home. Nay, drink at ease, and let us turn our thoughts to other matters, and bring not these to my remembrance, for surely my heart within me is sorrowful whenever any man puts me in mind of my true lord. But come, old man, do thou tell me of thine own troubles. And herein tell me true, that I may surely know. Who art thou of the sons of men, and whence? Where is thy city, where are they that begat thee? say on what manner of ship didst thou come, and how did sailors bring thee to Ithaca, and who did they avow them to be? For in no wise do I deem that thou camest hither by land."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying: "Yea now, I will tell thee all most plainly. Might we have food and sweet wine enough to last for long, while we abide within thy hut to feast thereon in quiet, and others betake them to their work; then could I easily speak for a whole year, nor yet make a full end of telling all the troubles of my spirit, all the travail I have wrought by the will of the gods."

Then he told him a feigned tale, that he came from Crete and had fought with the Achæans at Troy, and then wandered far and wide, and had been cast by the waves on the land of the Thesprotians. "There," he said, "I heard tidings of Odysseus, for the king told me that he had entertained him, and kindly entreated him on his way to his own country; and he showed me all the wealth that Odysseus had gathered, bronze and gold and well-wrought iron; yea, it would suffice for his children after him even to the tenth generation, so great were the treasures he had stored in the chambers of the king. He had gone, he said, to Dodona to hear the counsel of Zeus, from the high leafy oak tree of the god, how he should return to the fat land of Ithaca after long absence, whether openly or by stealth. Moreover, he sware, in mine own presence, as he poured the drink offering in his house, that the ship was drawn down to the sea and his company were ready, who were to convey him to his own dear

country. But ere that, he sent me off, for it chanced that a ship of the Thesprotians was starting for Dulichium, a land rich in grain. Thither he bade them guide me with all diligence to the king Acastus. But an evil counsel concerning me found favour in their sight, that even yet I might reach the extremity of sorrow. When the sea-faring ship had sailed a great way from the land, anon they sought how they might compass for me the day of slavery. They stript me of my garments, my mantle and a doublet, and changed my raiment to a vile wrap and doublet, tattered garments, even those thou seest now before thee; and in the evening they reached the fields of clear-seen Ithaca. There in the decked ship they bound me closely with a twisted rope, and themselves went ashore, and hasted to take supper by the sea-banks. Meanwhile the gods themselves lightly unclasped my bands, and muffling my head with the wrap I slid down the smooth ladder at the stern, and set my breast to the sea and rowed hard with both hands as I swam, and very soon I was out of the water and beyond their reach. Then I went up where there was a thicket, a wood in full leaf, and lay there crouching. And they went hither and thither making great moan; but when now it seemed to them little avail to go further on their quest, they departed back again aboard their hollow ship. And the gods themselves hid me easily and brought me

nigh to the homestead of a wise man; for still, methinks, I am ordained to live on."

Then didst thou make answer to him, swineherd Eumæus: "Ah! wretched guest, verily thou hast stirred my heart with the tale of all these things, of thy sufferings and thy wanderings. Yet herein, methinks, thou speakest not aright, and never shalt thou persuade me with the tale about Odysseus; why should one in thy plight lie vainly? Well I know of mine own self, as touching my lord's return, that he was utterly hated by all the gods, in that they smote him not among the Trojans nor in the arms of his friends, when he had wound up the clew of war. So should the whole Achæan host have builded him a barrow; yea, and for his son would he have won great glory in the after days; but now all ingloriously the spirits of the storm have snatched him away. But as for me I dwell apart by the swine and go not to the city, unless perchance wise Penelope summons me thither, when tidings of my master are brought I know not whence. Now all the people sit around and straitly question the news-bearer, both such as grieve for their lord that is long gone, and such as rejoice in devouring his living without atonement. But I have no care to ask or to inquire, since the day that an Ætolian cheated me with his story, one who had slain his man and wandered over wide lands and came to my steading,

and I dealt lovingly with him. He said that he had seen my master among the Cretans at the house of Idomeneus, mending his ships which the storms had broken. And he said that he would come home either by the summer or the harvest-tide, bringing much wealth with the godlike men of his company. And thou too, old man of many sorrows, seeing that some god hath brought thee to me, seek not my grace with lies, nor give me any such comfort; not for this will I have respect to thee or hold thee dear, but only for the fear of Zeus, the god of strangers, and for pity of thyself."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying: "Verily thy heart within thee is slow to believe, seeing that even with an oath I have not won thee, nor find credence with thee. But come now, let us make a covenant; and we will each one have for witnesses the gods above, who hold Olympus. If thy lord shall return to this house, put on me a mantle and doublet for raiment, and send me on my way to Dulichium, whither I had a desire to go. But if thy lord return not according to my word, set thy thralls upon me, and cast me down from a mighty rock, that another beggar in his turn may beware of deceiving."

And the goodly swineherd answered him, saying: "Yea, stranger, even so should I get much honour and good luck among men both now and ever hereafter, if

after bringing thee to my hut and giving thee a stranger's cheer, I should turn again and slay thee and take away thy dear life. With good heart thereafter would I pray to Zeus the son of Cronos! But now it is suppertime, and would that my fellows may speedily be at home, that we may make ready a dainty supper within the hut."

Thus they spake one to the other. And lo, the swine and the swineherds drew nigh. And the swine they shut up to sleep in their lairs, and a mighty din arose as the swine were being stalled. Then the goodly swineherd called to his fellows, saying:

"Bring the best of the swine, that I may sacrifice it for a guest of mine from a far land: and we too will have good cheer therewith, for we have long suffered and toiled by reason of the white-tusked swine, while others devour the fruit of our labour without atonement."

Now after they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, a thrall cleared away the bread, and they, now that they had eaten enough of bread and flesh, were moved to go to rest.

Now it was so that night came on foul with a blind moon, and Zeus rained the whole night through, and still the great West Wind, the rainy wind, was blowing. Then Odysseus spake among them that he might make trial of the swineherd, and see whether he would

take off his own mantle and give it to him or bid one of his company strip, since he cared for him so greatly:

"Listen now, Eumæus, and all of you his companions, I will utter a prayer and then tell my tale; so bids me witless wine, which drives even the wisest to sing and to laugh softly, and rouses him to dance, yea and makes him to speak out a word which were better unspoken. Howbeit, now that I have broken into speech, I will not hide aught. Oh, that I were young, and my might were steadfast, as in the day when we arrayed our ambush and led it beneath Troy town! And Odysseus, and Menelaüs son of Atreus, were leaders and with them I was a third in command; for so they bade me. Now when we had come to the city and the steep wall, we lay about the citadel in the thick brushwood, crouching under our arms among the reeds and the marsh land, and behold, the night came on foul, with frost, as the North Wind went down, while the snow fell from above, and crusted like rime, bitter cold, and the ice set thick about our shields. Now the others all had mantles and doublets, and slept in peace with their shields buckled close about their shoulders; but I as I went forth had left my mantle behind with my men, in my folly, thinking that even so I should not be cold: so I came with my shield alone, and my shining doublet. But when it was now the third watch of the night and the stars had passed the zenith, in that hour

I spake unto Odysseus who was nigh me, and thrust him with my elbow, and he listened straightway:

" 'Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, verily I shall cease from among living men, for this wintry cold is slaying me, seeing that I have no mantle. Some god beguiled me to wear a doublet only, and henceforth is no way of escape.'

"So I spake, and he apprehended a thought in his heart, such an one as he was in counsel and in fight. So he whispered and spake to me, saying:

" 'Be silent now, lest some other Achæans hear thee.' Therewith he raised his head upon his elbow, and spake, saying: 'Listen, friends, a vision from a god came to me in my sleep. Lo, we have come very far from the ships; I would there were one to tell it to Agamemnon, son of Atreus, shepherd of the host, if perchance he may send us hither a greater company from the ships.'

"So spake he, and Thoas, son of Andræmon, rose up quickly and cast off his purple mantle. And he started to run unto the ships, but I lay gladly in his garment, and the golden-throned Dawn showed her light. Oh, that I were young as then and my might steadfast! Then should some of the swineherds in the homestead give me a mantle, alike for love's sake and for pity of a good warrior. But now they scorn me for that sorry raiment is about my body."

Then didst thou make answer, O swineherd Eumæus: "Old man, the tale that thou hast told in his praise is very good, and so far thou has not misspoken aught, nor uttered a word unprofitably. Wherefore for this night thou shalt lack neither raiment nor aught else that is the due of a hapless suppliant, when he has met them that can befriend him. But in the morning thou shalt go shuffling in thine own rags, for there are not many mantles here or changes of doublet; for each man hath but one coat. But when the dear son of Odysseus comes, he himself will give thee a mantle and doublet for raiment, and send thee whithersoever thy heart and spirit bid."

With that he sprang up and set a bed for Odysseus near the fire, and thereon he cast skins of sheep and goats. There Odysseus laid him down and Eumæus cast a great thick mantle over him, which he had ever by him for a change of covering, when any terrible storm should arise.

So there Odysseus slept, and the young men slept beside him. But the swineherd had no mind to lie there in a bed away from the boars. So he made him ready to go forth and Odysseus was glad, because he had a great care for his master's substance while he was afar. First he cast his sharp sword about his strong shoulders, then he clad him in a very thick mantle, to keep the wind away; and he caught up the fleece of a great and

well-fed goat, and seized his sharp javelin, to defend him against dogs and men. Then he went to lay him down even where the white-tusked boars were sleeping, beneath the hollow of the rock, in a place of shelter from the North Wind.

BOOK XV

Pallas sends home Telemachus from Lacedæmon with the presents given him by Menelaüs. Telemachus landed, goes first to Eumæus.

Now Pallas Athene went to the wide land of Lacedæmon, to put the noble son of the great-hearted Odysseus in mind of his return, and to make him hasten his coming. And she found Telemachus, and the glorious son of Nestor, couched at the entry of the house of famous Menelaüs. The son of Nestor truly was overcome with soft sleep, but sweet sleep gat not hold of Telemachus, but, through the night divine, careful thoughts for his father kept him wakeful. And grey-eyed Athene stood nigh him and spake to him, saying:

"Telemachus, it is no longer meet that thou shouldst wander far from thy home, leaving thy substance behind thee, and men in thy house so wanton, lest they divide and utterly devour all thy wealth, and thou

shalt have gone on a vain journey. But come, rouse with all haste Menelaüs, of the loud war cry, to send thee on thy way, that thou mayest even yet find thy noble mother in her home. For even now her father and her brethren bid her wed Eurymachus, for he outdoes all the wooers in his presents, and hath been greatly increasing his gifts of wooing. Now another word will I tell thee, and do thou lay it up in thine heart. The noblest of the wooers lie in wait for thee of purpose, in the strait between Ithaca and rugged Samos, eager to slay thee before thou come to thine own country. But this, methinks, will never be; yea, sooner shall the earth close over certain of the wooers that devour thy livelihood. Nay, keep thy well-wrought ship far from those isles, and sail by night as well as day, and he of the immortals who hath thee in his keeping and protection will send thee a fair breeze in thy wake. But when thou hast touched the nearest shore of Ithaca, send thy ship and all thy company forward to the city, but for thy part seek first the swineherd who keeps thy swine, and is loyal to thee as of old. There do thou rest the night, and bid him go to the city to bear tidings of thy coming to the wise Penelope, how that she hath got thee safe, and thou art come up out of Pylos."

Therewith she departed to high Olympus. But

Telemachus woke the son of Nestor out of sweet sleep, touching him with his heel, and spake to him, saying:

"Awake, Peisistratus, son of Nestor, bring up thy horses of solid hoof, and yoke them beneath the car, that we may get forward on the road."

Then Peisistratus, son of Nestor, answered him, saying: "Telemachus, we may in no wise drive through the dark night, how eager soever to be gone; nay, soon it will be dawn. Tarry then, till the hero, the son of Atreus, spear-famed Menelaüs, brings gifts, and sets them on the car, and bespeaks thee kindly, and sends thee on thy way. For of him a guest is mindful all the days of his life, even of the host that shows him loving-kindness."

So spake he, and anon came the golden-throned Dawn. And Menelaüs, of the loud war cry, drew nigh to them, new risen from his bed, by fair-haired Helen. Now when the dear son of Odysseus marked him, he made haste and girt his shining doublet about him, and the hero cast a great mantle over his mighty shoulders and went forth at the door, and Telemachus, dear son of divine Odysseus, came up and spake to Menelaüs, saying:

"Menelaüs, son of Atreus, fosterling of Zeus, leader of the people, even now do thou speed me hence, to mine own dear country; for even now my heart is fain to come home again."

Then Menelaüs, of the loud war cry, answered him: "Telemachus, as for thee, I will not hold thee a long time here, that art eager to return. But abide till I bring fair gifts and set them on the car and thine own eyes behold them, and I bid the women to prepare the mid-day meal in the halls, out of the good store they have within. Honour and glory it is for us, and gain withal for thee, that ye should have eaten well ere ye go on your way, over vast and limitless lands."

Then the prince went down into the fragrant treasure chamber, not alone, for Helen went with him, and Megapenthes. Now, when they came to the place where the treasures were stored, then Atrides took a two-handled cup, and bade his son Megapenthes to bear a mixing bowl of silver. And Helen stood by the coffers, wherein were her robes of curious needle work which she herself had wrought. Then Helen, the fair lady, lifted one and brought it out, the widest and most beautifully embroidered of all, and it shone like a star, and lay far beneath the rest.

Then they went forth through the house till they came to Telemachus. And the strong Megapenthes bare the shining silver bowl and set it before him. And Helen came up, beautiful Helen, with the robe in her hands, and spake and hailed him:

"Lo! I too give thee this gift, dear child, a memorial of the hands of Helen, against the day of thy desire, even of thy bridal, for thy bride to wear it. But meanwhile let it lie by thy dear mother in her chamber. And may joy go with thee to thy well-builded house, and thine own country."

Now when they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, then did Telemachus and the glorious son of Nestor yoke the horses and climb into the inlaid car. And they drave forth from the gateway and the echoing gallery. After these Menelaüs, of the fair hair, son of Atreus, went forth bearing in his right hand a golden cup of honey-hearted wine, that they might pour a drink-offering ere they departed. And he stood before the horses and spake his greeting:

"Farwell, knightly youths, and salute in my name Nestor, the shepherd of the people; for truly he was gentle to me as a father, while we sons of the Achæans warred in the land of Troy."

And wise Telemachus answered him, saying: "Yea verily, O fosterling of Zeus, we will tell him all on our coming even as thou sayest. Would God I were so sure to find Odysseus in his home when I return to Ithaca and to tell him how I have met with all manner of loving-kindness at thy hands ere my departure, and now take with me treasures many and goodly!"

And even as he spake a bird flew forth at his right

hand, an eagle that bare in his claws a great white goose, a tame fowl from the yard, and men and women followed shouting. But the bird drew near them and flew off to the right, across the horses, and they that saw it were glad, and their hearts were all comforted within them. And Peisistratus, son of Nestor, first spake among them:

"Consider, Menelaüs, fosterling of Zeus, leader of the people, whether God hath showed forth this sign for us twain, or for thee thyself."

So spake he, and the warrior Menelaüs pondered thereupon, how he should take heed to answer, and interpret it aright.

And long-robed Helen took the word, and spake, saying: "Hear me, and I will prophesy as the Immortals put it into my heart, and as I deem it will be accomplished. Even as yonder eagle came down from the hill, the place of his birth and kin, and snatched away the goose that was fostered in the house, even so shall Odysseus return home after much trial and long wanderings and take vengeance; yea, or even now is he at home and sowing the seeds of evil for all the wooers."

Then wise Telemachus answered her, saying: "Now may Zeus ordain it so, Zeus the thunderer and the lord of Here. Then would I do thee worship, as to a god, even in my home afar."

He spake and smote the horses with a lash, and they sped quickly toward the plain, in eager course through the city. So all day long they swayed the yoke they bore upon their necks. And the sun sank, and all the ways were darkened. And they came to Pheræ, to the house of Diocles. There they rested for the night, and by them he set the entertainment of strangers.

Now so soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, they yoked the horses and mounted the inlaid car. And forth they drave from the gateway and the echoing gallery. And he touched the horses with the whip to start them, and the pair flew onward nothing loth. And soon thereafter they reached the steep hold of Pylos. Then Telemachus spake unto the son of Nestor, saying:

"Take me not hence past my ship, O fosterling of Zeus, but leave me there, lest that old man keep me in his house in my despite, out of his eager kindness, for I must go right quickly home."

So spake he, and the son of Nestor communed with his own heart how he might make promise, and duly fulfil the same. So as he thought thereon, in this wise it seemed to him best. He turned back his horses toward the swift ship and the sea-banks, and took forth the fair gifts and set them in the hinder part of the ship, the raiment and the gold which Menelaüs

gave him. And he called to Telemachus and spake to him winged words:

"Now climb the ship with all haste, and bid all thy company do likewise, ere I reach home and bring the old man word. For well I know in my mind and heart that, being so wilful of heart, he will not let thee go, but he himself will come hither to bid thee to his house, and methinks that he will not go back without thee: for very wroth will he be despite thine excuse."

Thus he spake, and drave the horses with the flowing manes back to the town of the Pylians, and came quickly to the halls. And Telemachus called to his companions and commanded them, saying:

"Set ye the gear in order, my friends, in the black ship, and let us climb aboard that we may make way upon our course."

So spake he, and they gave good heed and hearkened Then straightway they loosed the hawsers, and raised the mast of pine tree, and set it in the hole of the cross plank and made it fast with forestays, and hauled up the white sails with twisted ropes of ox-hide. And grey-eyed Athene sent them a favouring breeze, rushing violently through the clear sky that the ship might speedily finish her course over the salt water of the sea.

Now Odysseus and the goodly swineherd were

supping in the hut, and the other men sat at meat with them. So when they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, Odysseus spake among them, to prove the swineherd, whether he would still entertain him diligently and bid him abide there in the steading or send him forward to the city:

"Listen now, Eumæus, and all the others of the company. In the morning I would fain be gone to the town to go a-begging, that I be not ruinous to thyself and thy fellows. Now advise me well, and lend me a good guide by the way to lead me thither; and through the city will I wander alone as needs I must, if perchance one may give me a cup of water and a morsel of bread. Moreover I would go to the house of divine Odysseus and bear tidings to the wise Penelope, and consort with the wanton wooers, if haply they might grant me a meal out of the boundless store that they have by them. Lightly might I do good service among them, even all that they would. For lo! I will tell thee and do thou mark and listen. By the favour of Hermes, the messenger, who gives grace and glory to all men's work, no mortal may vie with me in the business of a serving-man, in piling well a fire, in cleaving dry faggots, and in carving and roasting flesh and in pouring of wine, those offices wherein meaner men serve their betters."

Then didst thou speak to him in heaviness of heart,

swineherd Eumæus: "Ah! wherefore, stranger hath such a thought arisen in thine heart? Surely thou art set on perishing utterly there, if thou wouldst indeed go into the throng of the wooers, whose outrage and violence reacheth even to the iron heaven! Not such as thou are their servants; they that minister to them are young and gaily clad in mantles and in doublets, and their heads are anointed with oil, and they are fair of face, and the polished boards are laden with bread and flesh and wine. Nay, abide here, for none is vexed by thy presence, neither I nor any of my fellows that are with me. But when the dear son of Odysseus comes, he himself will give thee a mantle and a doublet for raiment, and will send thee whithersoever thy heart and spirit bid thee go."

Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus answered him: "Oh, that thou mayest so surely be dear to father Zeus as thou art to me, in that thou didst make me to cease from wandering and dread woe! For there is no other thing more mischievous to men than roaming; yet for their cursed belly's need men endure sore distress, to whom come wandering and tribulation and pain. But behold now, since thou stayest me here, and biddest me wait his coming, tell me of the mother of divine Odysseus, and of the father of whom at his departure he left behind him on the threshold of old age; are they, it may be, yet alive beneath the sunlight, or already dead and within the house of Hades?"

Then spake to him the swineherd, a master of men: "Yea now, stranger, I will plainly tell thee all. Laertes yet lives, and prays evermore to Zeus that his life may waste from out his limbs within his halls. For he has wondrous sorrow for his son that is far away, and for the wedded lady his wise wife, whose death afflicted him in chief and brought him to old age before his day. Now she died of very grief for her son renowned, by an evil death, so may no man perish who dwells here and is a friend to me in word and deed!"

Thus they spake one with the other. Then they laid them down to sleep for no long while, but for a little space, for soon came the throned Dawn. But on the shore the company of Telemachus were striking their sails, and took down the mast quickly and rowed the ship on to anchorage. And they cast anchors and made fast the hawsers, and themselves too stept forth upon the strand of the sea, and made ready the mid-day meal, and mixed the dark wine. Now when they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, wise Telemachus first spake among them:

"Do ye now drive the black ship to the city, while I will go to the fields and to the herdsmen, and at even I will return to the city, when I have seen my lands. And in the morning I will set by you the wages of the voyage, a good feast of flesh and of sweet wine."

And Telemachus bound his goodly sandals beneath

his feet, and seized a mighty spear, shod with sharp bronze, from the deck of the ship and his men loosed the hawsers. So they thrust off and sailed to the city, as Telemachus bade them, the dear son of divine Odysseus. But swiftly his feet bore him on his forward way, till he came to the court, where were his swine out of number; and among them the good swineherd slept, a man loyal to his lords.

BOOK XVI

Telemachus sends Eumæus to the city to tell his mother of his return. And how, in the meantime, Odysseus discovers himself to his son.

Now these twain, Odysseus and the goodly swineherd, within the hut had kindled a fire, and were making ready breakfast at the dawn, and had sent forth the herdsmen with the droves of swine. And round Telemachus the hounds, that love to bark, fawned and barked not, as he drew nigh. And goodly Odysseus took note of the fawning of the dogs, and the noise of footsteps fell upon his ears. Then straight he spoke to Eumæus winged words:

"Eumæus, verily some friend or some other of thy familiars will soon be here, for the dogs do not bark but fawn around, and I catch the sound of footsteps."

While the word was yet on his lips, his own dear son stood at the entering in of the gate. Then the swineherd sprang up in amazement, and out of his hands fell the vessels wherewith he was busied in mingling the dark wine. And he came over against his master and kissed his head and both his beautiful eyes and both his hands, and he let a great tear fall. And even as a loving father welcomes his son that has come in the tenth year from a far country, his only son and well-beloved, for whose sake he has had great sorrow and travail, even so did the goodly swineherd fall upon the neck of godlike Telemachus, and kiss him all over as one escaped from death, and he wept aloud and spake to him winged words:

"Thou art come, Telemachus, sweet light of mine eyes; methought I should see thee never again, after thou hadst gone in thy ship to Pylos. Nay, now enter, dear child, that my heart may be glad at the sight of thee in mine house, who hast newly come from afar. For thou dost not often visit the field and the herdsmen, but abidest in the town; so it seems has thy good pleasure been, to look on the ruinous throng of the wooers."

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: "So be it, father, as thou sayest; and for thy sake am I come hither to see thee with mine eyes, and to hear from thy lips whether my mother yet abides in the halls

or another has already wedded her, and the couch of Odysseus, perchance, lies in lack of bedding and deep in foul spiderwebs."

Then the swineherd, a master of men, answered him: "Yea verily, she abides with patient spirit in thy halls, and wearily for her the nights wane always and the days, in shedding of tears."

So he spake and took from him the spear of bronze. Then Telemachus passed within and crossed the threshold of stone. As he came near, his father Odysseus arose from his seat to give him place; but Telemachus, on his part, stayed him and spake saying:

"Be seated, stranger, and we will find a seat some other where in our steading, and there is a man here to set it for us."

So he spake, and Odysseus went back and sat him down again. And the swineherd strewed for Telemachus green brushwood below, and a fleece thereupon, and there presently the dear son of Odysseus sat him down. Next the swineherd set by them platters of roast flesh, the fragments that were left from the meal of yesterday. And wheaten bread he briskly heaped up in baskets, and mixed the honey-sweet wine in a goblet of ivy wood, and himself sat down over against divine Odysseus. So they stretched forth their hands upon the good cheer set before them. Now when they had put from them the desire of meat

and drink, Telemachus spake to the goodly swineherd, saying:

"Father, whence came this stranger to thee? How did sailors bring him to Ithaca? And who did they avow them to be? For in no wise, I deem, did he come hither by land."

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumæus: "Yea now, my son, I will plainly tell thee all. Of wide Crete he avows him to be by lineage, and he says that round many cities of mortals he has wandered at adventure; even so has some god spun for him the thread of fate. But now, as a runaway from a ship of the Thesprotians, has he come to my steading, and I will give him to thee for thy man; do with him as thou wilt; he avows him for thy suppliant."

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: "Eumæus, verily a bitter word is this that thou speakest. How indeed shall I receive this guest in my house? Myself I am young, and trust not yet to my strength of hands to defend me against the man who is angered without a cause. And my mother has divisions of heart, whether to abide here with me and keep the house, respecting the bed of her lord and the voice of the people, or straightway to go with whomsoever of the Achæans that woo her in the halls is the best man, and gives most bridal gifts. But behold, as for this guest of thine, now that he has come to

thy house, I will clothe him in a mantle and a doublet, goodly raiment, and I will give him a two-edged sword, and shoes for his feet, and send him on his way, whithersoever his heart and his spirit bid him go. Or, if thou wilt, hold him here in the steading and take care of him, and raiment I will send hither, and all manner of food to eat, that he be not ruinous to thee and to thy fellows. But thither into the company of the wooers would I not suffer him to go, for they are exceeding full of infatuate insolence, lest they mock at him, and that would be a sore grief to me. And hard it is for one man, how valiant soever, to achieve aught among a multitude, for verily they are far the stronger."

Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus answered him: "My friend, since it is indeed my right to answer thee withal, of a truth my heart is rent as I hear your words, such infatuate deeds ye say the wooers devise in the halls, in despite of thee, a man so noble. Say, dost thou willingly submit thee to oppression, or do the people through the township hate thee, obedient to the voice of a god? Or hast thou cause to blame thy brethren, in whose battle a man puts trust, even if a great feud arise?"

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: "Yea now, stranger, I will plainly tell thee all. There is no grudge and hatred borne me by the whole people,

neither have I cause to blame my brethren, in whose battle a man puts trust, even if a great feud arise. For thus, as thou seest, Cronion has made us a house of but one heir. Arceisius got him one only son Laertes, and one only son Odysseus was begotten of his father, and Odysseus left me the only child of his getting in these halls, and had no joy of me; wherefore now are foemen innumerable in the house. For all the noblest that are princes in the islands, in Dulichium and Same and wooded Zacynthus, and as many as lord it in rocky Ithaca, all these woo my mother and waste my house. But as for her she neither refuseth the hated bridal, nor hath the heart to make an end; so they devour and minish my house; and ere long they make havoc likewise of myself. Howbeit these things surely lie on the knees of the gods. Nay, father, but do thou go with haste and tell the constant Penelope that she hath got me safe and that I am come up out of Pylos. As for me, I will tarry here, and do thou return hither when thou hast told the tidings to her alone: but of the other Achæans let no man learn it, for there be many that devise mischief against me."

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumæus: "I mark, I heed, all this thou speakest to one with understanding. But come, declare me this and tell it plainly; whether or no I shall go the same road with tidings

to Laertes, that hapless man, who till lately, despite his great sorrow for Odysseus' sake, yet had oversight of the tillage, and did eat and drink with the thralls in his house, as often as his heart within him bade him. But now, from the day that thou wentest in thy ship to Pylos, never to this hour, they say, hath he eaten and drunken as before, nor looked to the labours of the field, but with groaning and lamentation he sits sorrowing, and the flesh wastes away about his bones."

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: "Ah! the more grievous it is! Yet will we let him be, though we sorrow thereat. For if men might in any wise have all their will we should before aught else choose the day of my father's returning. But do thou when thou hast told the tidings come straight back, and go not wandering through the fields after Laertes. But speak to my mother that with all speed she send forth the house-dame her handmaid, secretly, for she might bear tidings to the old man."

With that word he roused the swineherd, who took his sandals in his hands and bound them beneath his feet and departed for the city. Now Athene noted Eumæus the swineherd pass from the steading, and she drew nigh in the semblance of a woman fair and tall, and skilled in splendid handiwork. And she stood in presence manifest to Odysseus over against

the doorway of the hut; but it was so that Telemachus saw her not before him and marked her not; for the gods in no wise appear visible to all. But Odysseus was ware of her and the dogs likewise, which barked not, but with a low whine shrank cowering to the far side of the steading. Then she nodded at him with bent brows, and goodly Odysseus perceived it, and came forth from the room, past the great wall of the yard, and stood before her, and Athene spake to him, saying:

"Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, now is the hour to reveal thy word to thy son, and hide it not, that ye twain having framed death and doom for the wooers, may fare to the famous town. Nor will I, even I, be long away from you, being right eager for battle."

Therewith Athene touched him with her golden wand. First she cast about his breast a fresh linen robe and a doublet, and she increased his bulk and bloom. Dark his colour grew again, and his cheeks filled out, and the black beard spread thick around his chin.

Now she, when she had so wrought, withdrew again, but Odysseus went into the hut, and his dear son marvelled at him and looked away for very fear lest it should be a god, and he uttered his voice and spake to him winged words:

"Even now, stranger, thou art other in my sight than that thou wert a moment since, and other garments thou hast, and the colour of thy skin is no longer the same. Surely thou art a god of those that keep the wide heaven. Nay, then, be gracious, that we may offer to thee well-pleasing sacrifices and golden gifts, beautifully wrought; and spare us I pray thee."

Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus answered him, saying: "Behold, no god am I; why likenest thou me to the immortals? Nay, thy father am I, for whose sake thou sufferest many pains and groanest sore, and submittest thee to the despite of men."

At the word he kissed his son, and from his cheeks let a tear fall to earth: before, he had stayed the tears continually. But Telemachus (for as yet he believed not that it was his father) answered in turn and spake, saying:

"Thou are not Odysseus my father, but some god beguiles me, that I may groan for more exceeding sorrow. For it cannot be that a mortal man should contrive this by the aid of his own wit, unless a god were himself to visit him, and lightly of his own will to make him young or old. For truly, but a moment gone, thou wert old and foully clad, but now thou art like the gods who keep the wide heaven."

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying: "Telemachus, it fits thee not to marvel over-

much that thy father is come home, or to be amazed. Nay, for thou shalt find no other Odysseus come hither any more; but lo, I, all as I am, after sufferings and much wandering have come in the twentieth year to mine own country. Behold, this is the work of Athene, driver of the spoil, who makes me such manner of man as she will,—for with her it is possible,—now like a beggar, and now again like a young man, and one clad about in rich raiment. Easy it is for the gods who keep the wide heaven to glorify or to abase a mortal man."

With this word then he sat down again; but Telemachus, flinging himself upon his noble father's neck, mourned and shed tears, and in both their hearts arose the desire of lamentation. And they wailed aloud, more ceaselessly than birds, sea-eagles or vultures of crooked claws, whose younglings the country folk have taken from the nest, ere yet they are fledged. Even so pitifully fell the tears beneath their brows. And now would the sunlight have gone down upon their sorrowing, had not Telemachus spoken to his father suddenly:

"And in what manner of ship, father dear, did sailors at length bring thee hither to Ithaca? And who did they avow them to be? For in no wise, I deem, didst thou come hither by land."

And the steadfast goodly Odysseus answered him:

"Yea now, my child, I will tell thee all the truth. The Phæacians brought me hither, mariners renowned, who speed other men too upon their way, whosoever comes to them. Asleep in the swift ship they bore me over the seas and set me down in Ithaca, and gave me splendid gifts, bronze and gold in plenty and woven raiment. And these treasures are lying by the gods' grace in the caves. But now I am come hither by the promptings of Athene, that we may take counsel for the slaughter of the foemen. But come, tell me all the tale of the wooers and their number, that I may know how many and what men they be, and that so I may commune with my good heart and advise me, whether we twain shall be able alone to make head against them without aid, or whether we should even seek succour of others."

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: "Verily, father, I have ever heard of thy great fame, for a warrior hardy of thy hands, and sage in counsel. But this is a hard saying of thine: awe comes over me; for it may not be that two men should do battle with many men and stalwart. For of the wooers there are not barely ten nor twice ten only, but many a decade more: and straight shalt thou learn the tale of them ere we part. From Dulichium there be two and fifty chosen lords, and six serving men go with them; and out of Same four and twenty men; and from

Zacynthus there are twenty lords of the Achæans; and from Ithaca itself full twelve men of the best, and with them Medon the henchman, and the divine minstrel, and two squires skilled in carving viands. If we shall encounter all these within the halls, see thou to it, lest bitter and baneful for us be the vengeance thou takest on their violence at thy coming. But do thou, if thou canst think of some champion, advise thee of any that may help us with all his heart."

Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus answered him, saying:

"Yea now, I will tell thee, and do thou mark and listen to me, and consider whether Athene with Father Zeus will suffice for us twain, or whether I shall cast about for some other champion."

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: "Verily the best of champions are these two thou namest, though high in the clouds is their seat, and they rule among all men and among the deathless gods."

Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus answered him: "Verily these twain will not keep aloof from the strong tumult of war, when between the wooers and us in my halls is held the trial of the might of Ares. But as now, do thou go homeward at the breaking of the day, and consort with the proud wooers. As for me, the swineherd will lead me to the town later in the day, in the likeness of a beggar, a wretched man and an

old. And if they shall evil entreat me in the house, let thy heart harden itself to endure while I am shamefully handled, yea, even if they drag me by the feet through the house to the doors, or cast at me and smite me: still do thou bear the sight. Yet another thing will I tell thee, and do thou ponder it in thy heart. When Athene, of deep counsel, shall put it into my heart, I will nod to thee with my head and do thou note it, and carry away all thy weapons of war that lie in the halls, and lay them down every one in the secret place of the lofty chamber. And when the wooers miss them and ask thee concerning them, thou shalt beguile them with soft words, saying:

" 'Out of the smoke have I laid them by, since they are no longer like those that Odysseus left behind him of old when he went to Troy, but they are wholly marred: so mightily hath passed upon them the vapour of fire. Moreover Cronion hath put into my heart this other and greater care, that perchance, when ye are heated with wine, ye set a quarrel between you and wound one the other and thereby shame the feast and the wooing; for iron of itself draws a man thereto.' But for us twain alone leave two swords and two spears and two shields of ox-hide to grasp, that we may rush upon the arms and seize them; and then shall Pallas Athene and Zeus the counsellor enchant the wooers to their ruin. Yet another thing

will I tell thee, and do thou ponder it in thy heart. If in very truth thou art my son and of our blood, then let no man hear that Odysseus is come home; neither let Laertes know it, nor the swineherd nor any of the household nor Penelope herself, but let me and thee alone discover the intent of the women. Yea, and we would moreover make trial of certain of the men among the thralls, and learn who of them chances to honour us and to fear us heartily, and who regards us not at all and holds even thee in no esteem, so noble a man as thou art."

Then his renowned son answered him, and said: "O my father, of a truth thou shalt learn, methinks, even hereafter what spirit I am of, for no whit doth folly possess me. But I deem not that this device of thine will be gainful to us twain, so I bid thee to give heed. For thou shalt be long time on thy road to little purpose, making trial of each man, while thou visitest the farm lands; but at ease in thy halls the wooers devour thy goods with insolence and now there is no sparing. Howbeit I would have thee take knowledge of the women, who they be that dishonour thee, and who are guiltless. But of the men I would not that we should make trial in the steadings, but that we should see to this task afterwards, if indeed thou knowest some sign from Zeus, lord of the ægis."

Thus they spake one to the other. And now the well-

builded ship was being brought to land at Ithaca, the ship that bare Telemachus from Pylos with all his company. When they were now come within the deep harbour, the men drew up the black ship on the shore, while squires, haughty of heart, bare away their weapons, and straightway carried the glorious gifts to the house of Clytius. Anon they sent forward a herald to the house of Odysseus to bear the tidings to prudent Penelope, namely, how Telemachus was in the field, and had bidden the ship sail to the city, lest the noble queen should be afraid, and let the round tears fall. So these two met, the herald and the goodly swineherd, come on the same errand to tell all to the lady. Now when they were got to the house of the divine king, the herald spake out among all the handmaids, saying:

"Verily, O queen, thy son hath come out of Pylos."

But the swineherd went up to Penelope, and told her all that her dear son had bidden him say. So, when he had declared all that had been enjoined him, he went on his way to the swine and left the enclosure and the hall.

Now the wooers were troubled and downcast in spirit, and forth they went from the hall past the great wall of the court, and there in front of the gates they sat them down. And Eurymachus son of Polybus first spake among them, saying:

"Verily, friends, a proud deed hath Telemachus ac-

complished with a high hand, even this journey, and we said that he should never bring it to pass. But come, launch we a black ship, the best there is, and let us get together oarsmen of the sea, who shall straightway bear word to our friends to return home with speed."

The word was yet on his lips, when Amphinomus turned in his place and saw the ship within the deep harbour, and the men lowering the sails and with the oars in their hands. Then sweetly he laughed out and spake among his fellows:

"Nay, let us now send no message any more, for lo, they are come home. Either some god has told them all or they themselves have seen the ship of Telemachus go by, and have not been able to catch her."

Thus he spake, and they arose and went to the sea-banks. Swiftly the men drew up the black ship on the shore, and squires, haughty of heart, bare away their weapons. And the wooers all together went to the assembly place, and suffered none other to sit with them, either of the young men or of the elders. Then Antinoüs spake among them, the son of Eupeithes:

"Lo now, how the gods have delivered this man from his evil case! All day long did scouts sit along the windy headlands, ever in quick succession, and at the going down of the sun we never rested for a night upon the shore, but sailing with our swift ship on the high seas we awaited the bright Dawn, as we lay in wait for

Telemachus, that we might take and slay the man himself; but meanwhile some god has brought him home. But even here let us devise an evil end for him, even for Telemachus, and let him not escape out of our hands, for methinks that while he lives we shall never achieve this task of ours. For he himself has understanding in counsel and wisdom, and the people no longer show us favour in all things. Nay, come, before he assembles all the Achæans to the gathering; for methinks that he will in no wise be slack, but will be exceeding wroth, and will stand up and speak out among them all, and tell how we plotted against him sheer destruction but did not overtake him. Then will they not approve us, when they hear these evil deeds. Beware then lest they do us a harm, and drive us forth from our country, and we come to the land of strangers. Nay, but let us be beforehand and take him in the field far from the city, or by the way; and let us ourselves keep his livelihood and his possessions, making fair division among us, but the house we would give to his mother to keep and to whomsoever marries her. But if this saying likes you not, but ye choose rather that he should live and keep the heritage of his father, no longer then let us gather here and eat all his store of pleasant substance, but let each one from his own hall woo her with his bridal gifts and seek to win her; so should she wed the man that gives the most and comes as the chosen of fate."

So he spake, and they all held their peace. Then Amphinomus made harangue and spake out among them; he was the famous son of Nisus the prince, the son of Aretias, and he led the wooers that came from out Dulichium, a land rich in wheat and in grass, and more than all the rest his words were pleasing to Penelope, for he was of an understanding mind. And now of his good will he made harangue, and spake among them:

"Friends, I for one would not choose to kill Telemachus; it is a fearful thing to slay one of the stock of kings! Nay, first let us seek the counsel of the gods, and if the oracles of great Zeus approve, myself I will slay him and bid all the rest to aid. But if the gods are disposed to avert it, I bid you to refrain."

So spake Amphinomus, and his saying pleased them well. Then straightway they arose and went to the house of Odysseus and entering in sat down on the polished seats.

Then the wise Penelope had a new thought; namely, to show herself to the wooers, so despiteful in their insolence; for she had heard of the death of her son that was to be in the halls, seeing that Medon the henchman had told her of it, who heard their counsels. So she went on her way to the hall, with the women her handmaids. Now when that fair lady had come unto the wooers, she stood by the doorpost of the well-builded

roof, holding up her glistening tire before her face, and rebuked Antinoüs and spake and hailed him:

"Antinoüs, full of all insolence, deviser of mischief! and yet they say that in the land of Ithaca thou art chiefest among thy peers in counsel and in speech. Nay, no such man dost thou show thyself. Fool! Why indeed dost thou contrive death and doom for Telemachus, and hast no regard unto suppliants who have Zeus to witness? Nay, but it is an impious thing to contrive evil one against another. What! Knowest thou not of the day when thy father fled to this house in fear of the people, for verily they were exceeding wroth against him, because he had followed with Taphian sea robbers and harried the Thesprotians, who were at peace with us? So they wished to destroy thy father and wrest from him his dear life, and utterly to devour all his great and abundant livelihood; but Odysseus stayed and withheld them, for all their desire. His house thou now consumest without atonement, and his wife thou wooest, and wouldst slay his son, and dost greatly grieve me. But I bid thee cease, and command the others to do likewise."

Then Eurymachus, son of Polybus, answered her, saying: "Daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, take courage, and let not thy heart be careful for these things. The man is not, nor shall be, nor ever shall be born, that shall stretch forth his hands against Telem-

achus, thy son, while I live and am on earth and see the light. For thus will I declare to thee, and it shall surely come to pass. Right quickly shall the black blood of such an one flow about my spear; for Odysseus, waster of cities, of a truth did many a time set me too upon his knees and gave me roasted flesh into my hand, and held the red wine to my lips. Wherefore Telemachus is far the dearest of all men to me, and I bid him have no fear of death, not from the wooers' hands; but from the gods none may avoid it."

Thus he spake comforting her, but was himself the while framing death for her son.

Now she ascended to her shining upper chamber, and then was bewailing Odysseus, her dear lord, till grey-eyed Athene cast sweet sleep upon her eyelids.

And in the evening the goodly swineherd came back to Odysseus and his son, and they went about to make ready the supper, when they had sacrificed a swine of a year old. Then Athene drew near Odysseus, son of Laertes, and smote him with her wand, and made him into an old man again. In sorry raiment she clad him about his body, lest the swineherd should look on him and know him, and depart to tell the constant Penelope, and not keep the matter in his heart.

Then Telemachus spake first to the swineherd, saying: "Thou has come, goodly Eumæus. What news is there in the town? Are the lordly wooers now come

home from their ambush, or do they still watch for me yonder, to take me on my way home?"

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumæus: "I had no mind to go about the city asking and inquiring hereof; my heart bade me get me home again, as quick as might be, when once I had told the tidings. And the swift messenger from thy company joined himself unto me, the henchman, who was the first to tell the news to thy mother. Yet this, too, I know, if thou wouldest hear; for I beheld it with mine eyes. Already had I come in my faring above the city, where is the hill Hermæan, when I marked a swift ship entering our haven, and many men there were in her, and she was laden with shields and two-headed spears, and methought they were the wooers, but I know not at all."

So spake he, and the mighty prince Telemachus smiled, and glanced at his father, while he shunned the eye of the swineherd.

Now when they had ceased from the work and got supper ready, they fell to feasting, and their hearts lacked not aught of the equal banquet. But when they had put from them the desire of meat and drink, they bethought them of rest, and took the boon of sleep.

BOOK XVII

Telemachus relates to his mother what he had heard at Pylos and Sparta.

So soon as early Dawn shone forth, the rosy-fingered, then Telemachus, the dear son of divine Odysseus, bound beneath his feet his goodly sandals, and took up his mighty spear that fitted his grasp, to make for the city; and he spake to his swineherd, saying:

"Verily, father, I am bound for the city, that my mother may see me, for methinks that she will not cease from grievous wailing and tearful lament, until she beholds my very face. But this command I give thee: Lead this stranger, the hapless one, to the city, that there he may beg his meat, and whoso chooses will give him a morsel of bread and a cup of water. As for myself, I can in no wise suffer every guest who comes to me, so afflicted am I in spirit. But if the stranger be sore angered hereat, the more grievous will it be for himself; howbeit I for one love to speak the truth."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying: "I, too, my friend, have no great liking to be left behind here. It is better that a beggar should beg his meat in the town than in the fields, and whoso chooses will give it me. For I am not now of an age to abide at the steading, and to obey in all things the word of the master. Nay, go, and this man that thou biddest will lead me, so soon as I shall be warmed with the

fire, and the sun waxes hot. For woefully poor are these garments of mine, and I fear lest the hoar frost of the dawn overcome me; moreover ye say the city is far away."

So he spake, and Telemachus passed out through the steading, stepping forth at a quick pace, and was sowing the seeds of evil for the wooers. Now when he was come to the fair-lying house, he set his spear against the tall pillar and leaned it there, and himself went in and crossed the threshold of stone.

And the nurse Eurycleia saw him far before the rest, as she was strewing skin coverlets upon the carven chairs, and straightway she drew near him, weeping, and all the other maidens of Odysseus, of the hardy heart, were gathered about him, and kissed him lovingly on the head and shoulders. Now wise Penelope came forth from her chamber, like Artemis or golden Aphrodite, and cast her arms about her dear son, and fell aweeping, and kissed his face and both his beautiful eyes, and wept aloud, and spake to him winged words:

"Thou art come, Telemachus, sweet light of mine eyes; methought I should see thee never again, after thou hadst gone in thy ship to Pylos, secretly and without my will, to seek tidings of thy dear father. Come now, tell me, what sight thou didst get of him."

And wise Telemachus answered her, saying: "Yea now, mother, I will tell thee all the truth. We went to

Pylos and to Nestor, the shepherd of the people, and he received me in his lofty house, and was diligent to entreat me lovingly, as a father might his son that had but newly come from strange lands after many years; even so diligently he cared for me with his renowned sons. Yet he said that he had heard no word from any man on earth concerning Odysseus, of the hardy heart, whether alive or dead. But he sent me forward on my way with horses and a chariot, well compact, to Menelaüs, son of Atreus, spearsman renowned. There I saw Argive Helen, for whose sake the Argives and Trojans bore much travail by the gods' designs. Then straightway Menelaüs, of the loud war cry, asked me on what quest I had come to goodly Lacedæmon. And I told him all the truth. Then he made answer, and spake, saying:

" 'For that whereof thou askest and entreatest me, be sure I will not swerve from the truth in aught that I say, nor deceive thee; but of all that the ancient one of the sea, whose speech is sooth, declared to me, not a word will I hide or keep from thee. He said that he saw Odysseus in an island, suffering strong pains in the halls of the nymph Calypso, who holds him there perforce; so that he may not come to his own country, for he has by him no ships with oars, and no companions to send him on his way over the broad back of the sea.' So spake Menelaüs, son of Atreus, spearsman

renowned. Then having fulfilled all, I set out for home, and the deathless gods gave me a fair wind, and brought me swiftly to mine own dear country."

But the wooers meantime were before the palace of Odysseus, taking their pleasure in casting of weights and of spears on a levelled place, as heretofore, in their insolence. But when it was now the hour for supper, and the sheep came home from the fields all around, and the men led them whose custom it was, then Medon, who of all the henchmen was most to their mind, and was ever with them at the feast, spake to them, saying:

"Noble youths, now that ye have had sport to your hearts' content, get you into the house, that we may make ready a feast; for truly it is no bad thing to take meat in season."

Even so he spake, and they rose up and departed, and were obedient to his word. Now when they were come into the fair-lying house, they laid aside their mantles on the chairs and high seats, and they sacrificed great sheep and stout goats, yea, and the fatlings of the boars and an heifer of the herd, and got ready the feast.

Now all this while Odysseus and the goodly swineherd were bestirring them to go from the field to the city; and the swineherd, a master of men, spake first, saying:

"Well, my friend, forasmuch as I see thou art eager to be going to the city to-day, even as my master gave command,—though myself I would well that thou shouldest be left here to keep the steading, but I hold him in reverence and fear, lest he chide me afterwards, and grievous are the rebukes of masters,—come then, let us go on our way, for lo, the day is far spent, and soon wilt thou find it colder toward evening."

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying: "I mark, I heed, all this thou speakest to one with understanding. But let us be going, and be thou my guide withal to the end. And if thou hast anywhere a staff ready cut, give it me to lean upon, for truly ye said that slippery was the way."

Therewith he cast about his shoulders a mean scrip, all tattered, and a cord withal to hang it, and Eumæus gave him a staff to his mind. So these twain went on their way, and the dogs and the herdsmen stayed behind to guard the steading. And the swineherd led his lord to the city in the guise of a beggar, a wretched man and an old, leaning on a staff; and sorry was the raiment wherewith he was clothed upon. But as they fared along the rugged path they drew near to the town, and came to the fair flowing spring, with a basin fashioned, whence the people of the city drew water. This well Ithacus and Neritus and Polyctor had builded. And around it was a thicket of alders that

grow by the waters, all circlewise, and down the cold stream fell from a rock on high, and above was reared an altar to the Nymphs, whereat all wayfarers made offering. In that place Melanthius, son of Dolius, met them, leading his goats to feast the wooers, the best goats that were in all the herds; and two herdsmen bare him company. Now when he saw them he reviled them, and spake and hailed them, in terrible and evil fashion, and stirred the heart of Odysseus, saying:

"Now in very truth the vile is leading the vile, for god brings ever like to like! Say, whither art thou leading this glutton,—thou wretched swineherd,—this plaguy beggar, a kill-joy of the feast? He is one to stand about and rub his shoulders against many door-posts, begging for scraps of meat, not for swords or cauldrons. If thou wouldst give me the fellow to watch my steading and sweep out the stalls, and carry young branches to the kids, then he might drink whey and get him a stout thigh. Howbeit, since he is practised only in evil, he will not care to betake him to the labour of the farm, but rather chooses to go louting through the land asking alms to fill his insatiate belly. But now I will speak out and my word shall surely be accomplished. If ever he fares to the house of divine Odysseus, many a stool that men's hands hurl shall fly about his head, and break upon his ribs, as they pelt him through the house."

Therewith, as he went past, he kicked Odysseus on the hip, in his witlessness, yet he drave him not from the path, but he abode steadfast. And Odysseus pondered whether he should rush upon him and take away his life with the staff, or lift him in his grasp and smite his head to the earth. Yet he hardened his heart to endure and refrained himself.

And they walked slowly on. But Melanthius stepped forth, and came very speedily to the house of the prince, and straightway he went in and sat down among the wooers, over against Eurymachus, for he loved him above all the rest. And they that ministered set by him a portion of flesh, and the grave dame brought wheaten bread and set it by him to eat. Now Odysseus and the goodly swineherd drew near and stood by, and the sound of the hollow lyre rang around them, for Phemius was lifting up his voice amid the company in song, and Odysseus caught the swineherd by the hand, and spake, saying:

"Eumæus, verily this is the fair house of Odysseus, and right easily might it be known and marked even among many. There is building beyond building, and the court of the house is cunningly wrought with a wall and battlements, and well fenced are the folding doors; no man may hold it in disdain. And I see that many men keep revel within, for the savour of the fat rises upward, and the voice of the lyre is heard there,

which the gods have made to be the mate of the feast."

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumæus: "Easily thou knowest it, for indeed thou never lackest understanding. But come, let us advise us how things shall fall out here. Either do thou go first within the fair-lying halls, and join the company of the wooers, so will I remain here, or if thou wilt, abide here, and I will go before thy face, and tarry not long, lest one see thee without, and hurl at thee or strike thee. Look well to this, I bid thee.

Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus answered him, saying: "I mark, I heed, all this thou speakest to one with understanding. Do thou then go before me, and I will remain here, for well I know what it is to be smitten and hurled at. My heart is full of hardiness, for much evil have I suffered in perils of waves and war; let this be added to the tale of those."

Thus they spake one to the other. And lo, a hound raised up his head and pricked his ears, even where he lay, Argos, the hound of Odysseus of the hardy heart, which of old himself had bred, but had got no joy of him, for ere that he went to sacred Ilios. Now in time past the young men used to lead the hound against wild goats and deer and hares; but as then, despised he lay (his master being afar) in the deep dung of mules and kine whereof an ample bed was spread before the doors, till the thralls of Odysseus should carry it away to

dung therewith his wide demesne. There lay the dog Argos, full of vermin. Yet even now when he was aware of Odysseus standing by, he wagged his tail and dropped both his ears, but nearer to his master he had not now the strength to draw. But Odysseus looked aside and wiped away a tear that he easily hid from Eumæus, and straightway he asked him, saying:

"Eumæus, verily this is a great marvel, this hound lying here in the dung. Truly he is goodly of growth, but I know not certainly if he have speed with this beauty, or if he be comely only, like as are men's trencher dogs that their lords keep for the pleasure of the eye."

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumæus: "In very truth this is the dog of a man that has died in a far land. If he were what once he was in limb and in feats of the chase, when Odysseus left him to go to Troy, soon wouldst thou marvel at the sight of his swiftness and his strength. There was no beast that could flee from him in the deep places of the wood, when he was in pursuit; for even on a track he was the keenest hound. But now he is holden in an evil case, and his lord hath perished far from his own country, and the careless women take no charge of him. Nay, thralls are no more inclined to honest service when their masters have lost the dominion, for Zeus, of the far-borne voice, takes away the half of a man's virtue, when the day of slavery comes upon him."

Therewith he passed within the fair-lying house, and went straight to the hall, to the company of the proud wooers. But upon Argos came the fate of black death even in the hour that he beheld Odysseus again, in the twentieth year.

Now godlike Telemachus was far the first to behold the swineherd as he came through the hall, and straightway then he beckoned and called him to his side. So Eumæus looked about and took a settle that lay by him, where the carver was wont to sit dividing much flesh among the wooers that were feasting in the house. This seat he carried and set by the table of Telemachus over against him, and there sat down himself. And the henchman took a mess and served it him, and wheaten bread out of the basket.

And close behind him Odysseus entered the house in the guise of a beggar, a wretched man and an old, leaning on his staff, and clothed on with sorry raiment. And he sat down on the ashen threshold within the doorway, leaning against a pillar of cypress wood, which the carpenter on a time had deftly planed, and thereon made straight the line. And Telemachus called the swineherd to him, and took a whole loaf out of the fair basket, and of flesh so much as his hands could hold in their grasp, saying:

"Take and give this to the stranger, and bid him go about and beg himself of all the wooers in

their turn, for shame is an ill mate of a needy man."

So he spake, and the swineherd went when he heard that saying, and stood by and spake to him winged words:

"Stranger, Telemachus gives thee these and bids thee go about and beg of all the wooers in their turn, for, he says, 'shame ill becomes a beggar man.' "

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered him and said: "King Zeus, grant me that Telemachus may be happy among men, and may he have all his heart's desire!"

Therewith he took the gift in both hands, and set it there before his feet on his unsightly scrip. Then he ate meat so long as the minstrel was singing in the halls. When he had done supper, and the divine minstrel was ending his song, then the wooers raised a clamour through the halls; but Athene stood by Odysseus, son of Laertes, and moved him to go gathering morsels of bread among the wooers, and learn which were righteous and which unjust. Yet not even so was she minded to redeem one man of them from an evil fate. So he set out, beginning on the right, to ask of each man, stretching out his hand on every side, as though he were a beggar from of old. And they pitied him, and gave him somewhat, and were amazed at him, asking one another who he was and whence he came.

Then Melanthius, the goatherd, spake among them:

"Listen, ye wooers of the renowned queen, concerning this stranger, for verily I have seen him before. The swineherd truly was his guide hither, but of him I have no certain knowledge, whence he avows him to be born."

So spake he, but Antinoüs rebuked the swineherd, saying: "Oh, notorious swineherd, wherefore, I pray thee, didst thou bring this man to the city? Have we not vagrants enough besides, plaguy beggars, kill-joys of the feast? Dost thou count it a light thing that they assemble here and devour the living of thy master, but thou must needs call in this man too?"

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumæus: "Antinoüs, no fair words are these of thine, noble though thou art. For who himself ever seeks out and bids to the feast a stranger from afar, save only one of those that are craftsmen of the people, a prophet or a healer of ills, or a shipwright, or even a godlike minstrel, who can delight all with his song? Nay, these are the men that are welcome over all the wide earth. But none would call a beggar to the banquet, to be a torment to himself. But thou art ever hard above all the other wooers to the servants of Odysseus, and, beyond all, to me; but behold, I care not, so long as my mistress, the constant Penelope, lives in the halls and godlike Telemachus."

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: "Be silent, answer him not, I pray thee, with many words,

for Antinoüs is wont ever to chide us shamefully with bitter speech, yea, and urges the others thereto."

Therewithal he spake winged words to Antinoüs: "Antinoüs, verily thou hast a good care for me, as it were a father for his son, thou that biddest me drive our guest from the hall with a harsh command. God forbid that such a thing should be! Take somewhat and give it him: lo, I grudge it not; nay, I charge thee to do it. And herein regard not my mother, nor any of the thralls that are in the house of divine Odysseus. Nay, but thou hast no such thought in thy heart, for thou art far more fain to eat thyself than to give to another."

Then Antinoüs answered him and spake, saying: "Telemachus, proud of speech, and unrestrained in fury, what word hast thou spoken? If all the wooers should vouchsafe him as much as I, this house would keep him far enough aloof even for three months' space."

So he spake, and seized the footstool whereon he rested his smooth feet as he sat at the feast, and showed it from beneath the table where it lay. But all the others gave somewhat and filled the wallet with bread and flesh; yea, and Odysseus was even now going back to the threshold, presently to taste of the bounty of the Achæans, but he halted by Antinoüs, and spake to him, saying:

"Friend, give me somewhat; for methinks thou art not the basest of the Achæans, but the best man of them all, for thou art like a king. Wherefore thou shouldest give me a portion of bread, and that a better than the others; so would I make thee renowned over all the wide earth. For I too once had a house of mine own among men, a rich man with a wealthy house, and many a time would I give to a wanderer, what manner of man soever he might be, and in whatsoever need he came. And I had thralls out of number, and all else in plenty, wherewith folk live well and have a name for riches. But Zeus, the son of Cronos, made me desolate of all,—for surely it was his will,—who sent me with wandering sea-robbers to go to Egypt and Cyprus, a far road, to my ruin."

Then Antinoüs answered, and spake, saying: "What god hath brought this plague hither to trouble the feast? Stand forth thus in the midst, away from my table, lest thou come soon to a bitter Egypt and a sad Cyprus; for a bold beggar art thou and a shameless. Thou standest by all in turn and recklessly they give to thee, for they hold not their hand nor feel any ruth in giving freely of others' goods, for that each man has plenty by him."

Then Odysseus of many counsels drew back and answered him: "Lo now, I see thou hast not wisdom with thy beauty! From out of thine own house thou wouldest

not give even so much as a grain of salt to thy suppliant, thou who now even at another's board dost sit, and canst not find it in thy heart to take of the bread and give it me, where there is plenty to thy hand."

He spake, and Antinoüs waxed yet more wroth at heart, and looked fiercely on him and spake winged words:

"Henceforth, methinks, thou shalt not get thee out with honour from the hall, seeing thou dost even rail upon me."

Therewith he caught up the footstool and smote Odysseus on the right shoulder, at the upper end of the back. But he stood firm as a rock, nor reeled he beneath the blow of Antinoüs, but shook his head in silence, brooding evil in the deep of his heart. Then he went back to the threshold, and sat him there, and laid down his well-filled scrip, and spake among the wooers:

"Hear me, ye wooers of the renowned queen, and I will say what my spirit within me bids me. Verily there is neither pain nor grief of heart, when a man is smitten in battle fighting for his own possessions, whether cattle or white sheep. But now Antinoüs hath stricken me for my wretched belly's sake, a thing accursed, that works much ill for men. Ah, if indeed there be gods and avengers of beggars, may the issues of death come upon Antinoüs before his wedding!"

Then Antinoüs, son of Eupeithes, answered him:

"Sit and eat thy meat in quiet, stranger, or get thee elsewhere, lest the young men drag thee by hand or foot through the house for thy evil words, and strip all thy flesh from off thee."

Even so he spake, and they were all exceeding wroth at his word. And on this wise would one of the lordly young men speak:

"Antinoüs, thou didst ill to strike the hapless wanderer, doomed man that thou art,—if indeed there be a god in heaven. Yea and the gods, in the likeness of strangers from far countries, put on all manner of shapes, and wander through the cities, beholding the violence and the righteousness of men."

So the wooers spake, but he heeded not their words. Now Telemachus nursed in his heart a mighty grief at the smiting of Odysseus, yet he let no tear fall from his eyelids to the ground, but shook his head in silence, brooding evil in the deep of his heart.

Now when wise Penelope heard of the stranger being smitten in the halls, she spake among her maidens, saying:

"Oh that Apollo, the famed archer, may so smite thee thyself, Antinoüs!"

And the house-dame, Eurynome, answered her, saying: "Oh that we might win fulfilment of our prayers! So should not one of these men come to the fair-throned Dawn."

And wise Penelope answered her: "Nurse, they are all enemies, for they all devise evil continually, but of them all Antinoüs is the most like to black fate. Some hapless stranger is roaming about the house, begging alms of the men, as his need bids him; and all the others filled his wallet and gave him somewhat but Antinoüs smote him between his right shoulder and the back with the stool."

So she spake among her maidens, sitting in her chamber, while goodly Odysseus was at meat. Then she called to her the goodly swineherd and spake, saying:

"Go thy way, goodly Eumæus, and bid the stranger come hither, that I may speak him a word of greeting, and ask him if haply he has heard tidings of Odysseus of the hardy heart, or seen him with his eyes; for he seems like one that has wandered far."

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumæus: "Queen, oh that the Achæans would hold their peace! so would he charm thy very heart, such things doth he say. For I kept him three nights and three days I held him in the steading, for to me he came first when he fled from the ship, yet he had not made an end of the tale of his affliction. Even as when a man gazes on a singer, whom the gods have taught to sing words of yearning joy to mortals, and they have a ceaseless desire to hear him, so long as he will sing; even so he

charmed me, sitting by me in the halls. He says that he is a friend of Odysseus and of his house, one that dwells in Crete, where is the race of Minos. Thence he has come hither even now, with sorrow by the way, onward and yet onward wandering; and he stands to it that he has heard tidings of Odysseus nigh at hand and yet alive in the fat land of the men of Thesprotia; and he is bringing many treasures to his home."

Then wise Penelope answered him, saying: "Go, call him hither, that he may speak to me face to face. And if I shall find that he has spoken nought but truth, I will clothe him with a mantle and a doublet, goodly raiment."

So she spake, and the swineherd departed when he heard that saying, and stood by the stranger and spake winged words:

"Father and stranger, wise Penelope, the mother of Telemachus, is calling for thee, and her mind bids her inquire as touching her lord, albeit she has sorrowed much already. And if she shall find that thou hast spoken nought but truth, she will clothe thee in a mantle and a doublet, whereof thou standest most in need. Moreover thou shalt beg thy bread through the land and shalt fill thy belly, and whosoever will, shall give to thee."

Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus answered him,

saying: "Eumæus, soon would I tell all the truth to the daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, for well I know his story, and we have borne our travail together. But somewhat I fear the throng of the froward wooers, whose outrage and violence reach even to the iron heaven. For even now, as I was going through the house, when this man struck and pained me sore, and that for no ill deed, neither Telemachus nor any other kept off the blow. Wherefore now, bid Penelope tarry in the halls, for all her eagerness, till the going down of the sun, and then let her ask me concerning her lord, as touching the day of his returning, and let her give me a seat yet nearer to the fire, for behold, I have sorry raiment, and thou knowest it thyself, since I made my supplication first to thee."

Even so he spake, and the swineherd departed when he heard that saying. And as he crossed the threshold Penelope spake to him:

"Thou bringest him not, Eumæus: what means the wanderer hereby? Can it be that he fears some one out of measure, or is he even ashamed of tarrying in the house? A shamefaced man makes a bad beggar."

Then didst thou make answer, swineherd Eumæus: "He speaks aright, and but as another would deem, in that he shuns the outrage of overweening men. Rather would he have thee wait till the going down of the sun. Yea, and it is far meeter for thyself, O queen,

to utter thy word to the stranger alone, and to listen to his speech."

Then the wise Penelope answered: "The stranger deems as a man of understanding, and it may well be even so. For there are no mortal men, methinks, so wanton as these, and none that devise such infatuate deeds."

So she spake, and the goodly swineherd departed into the throng of the wooers, when he had shown her all his message. And straightway he spake to Telemachus winged words, holding his head close to him, that the others might not hear:

"Friend, I am going hence to look after thy swine and the things of the farm, thy livelihood and mine; but do thou take charge of all that is here. Yet first look to thyself and take heed that no evil comes nigh thee, for many of the Achæans have ill will against us, whom may Zeus counfound before their mischief falls on us!"

And wise Telemachus answered him, and said: "Even so shall it be, father; and do thou get thee on thy way, when thou hast supped. And in the morning come again, and bring fair victims for sacrifice. And all these matters will be a care to me and to the deathless gods."

Thus he spake, and the other sat down again on the polished settle; and when he had satisfied his heart

with meat and drink, he went on his way to the swine, leaving the courts and the hall full of feasters; and they were making merry with dance and song, for already it was close on eventide.

BOOK XVIII

The fighting at fists of Odysseus with Irus. His admonitions to Amphinomus. Penelope appears before the wooers, and draws presents from them.

Then up came a common beggar, who was wont to beg through the town of Ithaca, one that was known among all men for ravening greed, for his endless eating and drinking, yet he had no force or might, though he was bulky enough to look on. Arnæus was his name, for so had his good mother given it him at his birth, but all the young men called him Irus, because he ran on errands, whensoever any might bid him. So now he came, and would have driven Odysseus from his own house, and began reviling him, and spake winged words:

"Get thee hence, old man, from the doorway, lest thou be even haled out soon by the foot. Seest thou not that all are now giving me the wink, and biding me drag thee forth? Nevertheless, I feel shame of

the task. Nay, get thee up, lest our quarrel soon pass even to blows."

Then Odysseus of many counsels looked fiercely on him, and spake, saying: "Sir, neither in deed nor word do I harm thee, nor do I grudge that any should give to thee, yea though it were a good handful. But this threshold will hold us both, and thou hast no need to be jealous for the sake of other men's goods. Thou seemest to me to be a wanderer, even as I am, and the gods it is that are like to give us gain. Only provoke me not overmuch to buffeting, lest thou anger me, and old though I be I defile thy breast and lips with blood. Thereby should I have the greater quiet to-morrow, for methinks that thou shalt never again come to the hall of Odysseus, son of Laertes."

Then the beggar Irus spake unto him in anger: "Lo now, how trippingly and like an old cinder-wife this glutton speaks, on whom I will work my evil will, and smite him right and left, and drive all the teeth from his jaws to the ground, like the tusks of a swine that spoils the corn. Gird thyself now, that even these men all may know our mettle in fight. Nay, how shouldst thou do battle with a younger man than thou?"

Thus did they whet each the other's rage right manfully before the lofty doors upon the polished

threshold. And the mighty prince Antinoüs heard the twain, and sweetly he laughed out, and spake among the wooers:

"Friends, never before has there been such a thing; such goodly game has a god brought to this house. The stranger yonder and Irus are biding each other to buffets. Quick, let us match them one against the other."

Then all at the word leaped up laughing, and gathered round the ragged beggars, and Antinoüs, son of Eupeithes, spake among them, saying: "Hear me, ye lordly wooers, and I will say somewhat. Here are goats' bellies lying at the fire, that we laid by at supper-time and filled with fat and blood. Now whichsoever of the twain wins, and shows himself the better man, let him stand up and take his choice of these puddings. And further, he shall always eat at our feasts, nor will we suffer any other beggar to come among us and ask for alms."

So spake Antinoüs, and the saying pleased them well. Then Odysseus of many counsels spake among them craftily:

"Friends, an old man and foredone with travail may in no wise fight with a younger. But my belly's call is urgent on me, that evil-worker, to the end that I may be subdued with stripes. But come now, swear me all of you a strong oath, so that none, for

the sake of showing a favour to Irus, may strike me a foul blow with heavy hand and subdue me by violence to my foe."

So he spake, and they all swore not to strike him, as he bade them. Now when they had sworn and done that oath, the mighty prince Telemachus once more spake among them:

"Stranger, if thy heart and lordly spirit urge thee to rid thee of this fellow, then fear not any other of the Achæans, for whoso strikes thee shall have to fight with many. Thy host am I, and the princes consent with me, Antinoüs and Eurymachus, men of wisdom both."

So spake he and they all consented thereto. Then Odysseus girt his rags about his loins, and let his thighs be seen, goodly and great, and his broad shoulders and breast and mighty arms were manifest. And Athene came nigh and made greater the limbs of the shepherd of the people. Then the wooers were exceedingly amazed, and thus would one speak looking to his neighbour:

"Right soon will Irus, un-Irused, have a bane of his own bringing, such a thigh as that old man shows from out his rags!"

So they spake, and the mind of Irus was pitifully stirred; but even so the servants girded him and led him out perforce in great fear, his flesh trembling on

his limbs. Then Antinoüs chid him, and spake and hailed him:

"Thou braggart, better for thee that thou wert not now, nor ever hadst been born, if indeed thou tremblest before this man, and art so terribly afraid; an old man too he is, and foredone with the travail that is come upon him."

So he spake, and yet greater trembling gat hold of the limbs of Irus, and they led him into the ring, and the twain put up their hands. Then the steadfast goodly Odysseus mused in himself whether he should smite him in such wise that his life should leave his body, even there where he fell, or whether he should strike him lightly, and stretch him on the earth. And as he thought thereon, this seemed to him the better way, to strike lightly, that the Achæans might not know him, who he was. Then the twain put up their hands, and Irus struck at the right shoulder, but the other smote him on his neck beneath the ear, and crushed in the bones, and straightway the red blood gushed up through his mouth, and with a moan he fell in the dust, and drave together his teeth as he kicked the ground. But the proud wooers threw up their hands, and died outright for laughter. Then Odysseus seized him by the foot, and dragged him forth through the doorway, till he came to the court-yard and the gates of the gallery, and he set him down

and rested him against the courtyard wall, and put his staff in his hands, and uttering his voice spake to him winged words:

"Sit thou there now, and scare off swine and dogs, and let not such an one as thou be lord over strangers and beggars, pitiful as thou art, lest haply some worse thing befall thee."

Thus he spake, and cast about his shoulders his mean scrip all tattered, and the cord therewith to hang it, and he gat him back to the threshold, and sat him down there again. Now the wooers went within laughing sweetly, and greeted him, saying:

"May Zeus, stranger, and all the other deathless gods give thee thy dearest wish, even all thy heart's desire, seeing that thou hast made that insatiate one to cease from his begging in the land!"

So they spake, and goodly Odysseus rejoiced in the omen of the words. And Antinoüs set by him the great pudding, stuffed with fat and blood, and Amphinomus took up two loaves from the basket, and set them by him and pledged him in a golden cup, and spake saying:

"Father and stranger, hail! may happiness be thine in the time to come; but as now, thou art fast holden in many sorrows."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying: "Amphinomus, verily thou seemest to me a

prudent man enough, for such too was the father of whom thou art sprung, for I have heard the fair fame of him, how that Nisus of Dulichium was a good man and a rich, and his son they say thou art, and thou seemest a man of understanding. Wherefore I will tell thee, and do thou mark and listen to me. Nought feebler doth the earth nurture than man, of all the creatures that breathe and move upon the face of the earth. Lo, he thinks that he shall never suffer evil in time to come, while the gods give him happiness, and his limbs move lightly. But when again the blessed gods have wrought for him sorrow, even so he bears it, as he must, with a steadfast heart. For the spirit of men upon the earth is even as their day, that comes upon them from the father of gods and men. Yea, and I too once was like to have been prosperous among men, but many an infatuate deed I did, giving place to mine own hardihood and strength, and trusting to my father and my brethren. Wherefore let no man for ever be lawless any more, but keep quietly the gifts of the gods, whatsoever they may give. Such infatuate deeds do I see the wooers devising, as they waste the wealth, and hold in no regard the wife of a man, who, methinks, will not much longer be far from his friends and his own land; nay, he is very near. But for thee, may some god withdraw thee hence to thy home, and mayest thou not meet him in the day

when he returns to his own dear country! For not without blood, as I deem, will they be sundered, the wooers and Odysseus, when once he shall have come beneath his own roof."

Thus he spake, and poured an offering and then drank of the honey-sweet wine, and again set the cup in the hands of the arrayer of the people. But the other went back through the house, sad at heart and bowing his head; for verily his soul boded evil. Yet even so he avoided not his fate, for Athene had bound him likewise to be slain outright at the hands and by the spear of Telemachus. So he sat down again on the high seat whence he had arisen.

Now the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, put it into the heart of the daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, to show herself to the wooers, that she might make their heart greatly to swell for joy, and that she might win yet more worship from her lord and her son than heretofore. So she laughed an idle laugh, and spake to the nurse, and hailed her, saying:

"Eurynome, my heart yearns, though before I had no such desire, to show myself to the wooers, hateful as they are. I would also say a word to my son, that will be for his weal, namely, that he should not for ever consort with the proud wooers, who speak friendly with their lips, but imagine evil in the latter end."

Then the housewife, Eurynome, spake to her,

saying: "Yea, my child, all this thou hast spoken as is meet. Go then, and declare thy word to thy son and hide it not, but first wash thee and anoint thy face, and go not as thou art with thy cheeks all stained with tears. Go, for it is little good to sorrow always, and never cease. And lo, thy son is now of an age to hear thee, he whom thou hast above all things prayed the gods that thou mightest see with a beard upon his chin."

Then wise Penelope answered her, saying: "Eurynome, speak not thus comfortably to me, for all thy love, bidding me to wash and be anointed with ointment. For the gods that keep Olympus destroyed my bloom, since the day that he departed in the hollow ships. But bid Autonoë and Hippodameia come to me, to stand by my side in the halls. Alone I will not go among men, for I am ashamed."

So she spake, and the old woman passed through the chamber to tell the maidens, and hasten their coming.

Thereon the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, had another thought. She shed a sweet slumber over the daughter of Icarius, who sank back in sleep, and all her joints were loosened as she lay in the chair, and the fair goddess the while was giving her gifts immortal, that all the Achæans might marvel at her. Her fair face first she steeped with beauty imperishable, such as that

wherewith the crowned Cytherea is anointed, when she goes to the lovely dances of the Graces. And she made her taller and greater to behold, and made her whiter than new-sawn ivory. Now when she had wrought thus, that fair goddess departed, and the white-armed handmaidens came forth from the chamber and drew nigh with a sound of voices. Then sweet sleep left hold of Penelope, and she rubbed her cheeks with her hands, and said:

"Surely soft slumber wrapped me round, most wretched though I be. Oh! that pure Artemis would give me so soft a death even now, that I might no more waste my life in sorrow of heart, and longing for the manifold excellence of my dear lord, for that he was foremost of the Achæans."

With this word she went down from the shining upper chamber, not alone, for two handmaidens likewise bare her company. But when the fair lady had now come to the wooers, she stood by the doorpost of the well-builded room, holding her glistening tire before her face, and on either side of her stood a faithful handmaid. And straightway the knees of the wooers were loosened, and their hearts were enchanted with love. But she spake to Telemachus, her dear son:

"Telemachus, thy mind and thy thoughts are no longer stable as they were. While thou wast still a

child, thou hadst a yet nimbler and more gainful wit, but now that thou art great of growth, and art come to the measure of manhood, and a stranger looking to thy stature and thy beauty might say that thou must be some rich man's son, thy mind and thy thoughts are no longer right as of old. For lo, what manner of deed has been done in these halls, that thou hast suffered thy guest to be thus shamefully dealt with! How would it be now, if the stranger sitting in our house, were thus to come to some harm all through this evil handling? Shame and disgrace would be thine henceforth among men."

Then wise Telemachus answered her: "Mother mine, as to this matter I count it no blame that thou art angered. Yet have I knowledge and understanding of each thing, of the good and of the evil; but heretofore I was a child. Howbeit I cannot devise all things according to wisdom, for these men in their evil counsel drive me from my will, on this side and on that, and there is none to aid me. Howsoever this battle between Irus and the stranger did not fall out as the wooers would have had it, but the stranger proved the better man. Would to Father Zeus and Athene and Apollo, that the wooers in our halls were even now thus vanquished, and wagging their heads, some in the court, and some within the house, and that the limbs of each man were loosened in such

fashion as Irus yonder sits now, by the courtyard gates wagging his head, like a drunken man, and cannot stand upright on his feet, nor yet get him home to his own place, seeing that his limbs are loosened!"

Thus they spake one to another. But Eurymachus spake to Penelope, saying:

"Daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, if all the Achæans in Iasian Argos could behold thee, even a greater press of wooers would feast in your halls from to-morrow's dawn, since thou dost surpass all women in beauty and stature, and within in wisdom of mind."

Then wise Penelope answered him: "Eurymachus, surely my excellence, both of face and form, the gods destroyed in the day when the Argives embarked for Ilios, and with them went my lord Odysseus. If but he might come and watch over this my life, greater thus would be my fame and fairer! But now am I in sorrow; such a host of ills some god has sent against me. Ah, well do I remember, when he set forth and left his own country, how he took me by the right hand at the wrist and spake, saying:

" 'Lady, methinks that all the goodly-greaved Achæans will not win a safe return from Troy; for the Trojans too, they say, are good men at arms, as spearsmen, and bowmen, and drivers of fleet horses, such as ever most swiftly determine the great strife

of equal battle. Wherefore I know not if the gods will suffer me to return, or whether I shall be cut off there in Troy; so do thou have a care for all these things. Be mindful of my father and my mother in the halls, even as now thou art, or yet more than now, while I am far away. But when thou seest thy son a bearded man, marry whom thou wilt and leave thine own house.'

"Even so did he speak, and now all these things have an end. Then night shall come when a hateful marriage shall find me out, me most luckless, whose good hap Zeus has taken away. But furthermore this sore trouble has come on my heart and soul; for this was not the manner of wooers in time past. Whoso wish to woo a good lady and the daughter of a rich man, and vie one with another, themselves bring with them oxen of their own and goodly flocks, a banquet for the friends of the bride, and they give the lady splendid gifts, but do not devour another's livelihood without atonement."

Thus she spake, and the steadfast goodly Odysseus rejoiced because she drew from them gifts, and beguiled their souls with soothing words, while her heart was set on other things.

Then Antinoüs, son of Eupeithes, answered her again: "Daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, the gifts which any of the Achæans may choose to bring hither,

do thou take; for it is not well to refuse a gift. But we for our part will neither go to our lands nor otherwhere, before thou art wedded to the best man of the Achæans."

So spake Antinoüs, and the saying pleased them well, and each man sent a henchman to bring his gifts. For Antinoüs, his henchman bare a broidered robe, great and very fair, wherein were golden brooches, twelve in all, fitted with well-bent clasps. And the henchman straightway bare Eurymachus a golden chain of curious work, strung with amber beads, shining like the sun. And his squires bare for Eurydamas a pair of ear-rings, with three drops well wrought, and much grace shone from them. And out of the house of Peisander the prince, the son of Polyctor, the squire brought a necklet, a very lovely jewel. And likewise the Achæans brought each one some other beautiful gift.

Then the fair lady went aloft to her upper chamber, and her attendant maidens bare for her the lovely gifts, while the wooers turned to dancing and the delight of song, and therein took their pleasure, and awaited the coming of eventide. And dark evening came on them at their pastime. Anon they set up three braziers in the halls, to give them light, and on these they laid firewood all around, faggots seasoned long since and sere, and new split with the axe, and to them

they set burning pinebrands. And the maids of Odysseus, of the hardy heart, in turn were rousing the light of the flames. Then the prince Odysseus of many counsels himself spake among them, saying:

"Ye maidens of Odysseus, the lord so long afar, get ye into the chambers where the honoured queen abides, and twist the yarn at her side, and gladden her heart as ye sit in the chamber, or card the wools with your hands; but I will minister light to all these that are here. For even if they are minded to wait the throned Dawn, they shall not outstay me, so long enduring am I."

So he spake, but they laughed and looked one at the other. And the fair Melantho chid him shamefully, Melantho that Dolius begat, but Penelope reared, and entreated her tenderly as she had been her own child, and gave her playthings to her heart's desire. Yet, for all that, the sorrow of Penelope touched not her heart, but she loved Eurymachus and was his paramour. Now she chid Odysseus with railing words:

"Wretched guest, surely thou are some brain-struck man, seeing that thou dost not choose to go and sleep at a smithy, or at some place of common resort, but here thou pratest much and boldly among many lords and hast no fear at heart. Verily wine has got about thy wits, or perchance thou art always of this mind,

and so thou dost babble idly. Art thou beside thyself for joy, because thou hast beaten the beggar Irus? Take heed lest a better man than Irus rise up presently against thee, to lay his mighty hands about thy head and bedabble thee with blood, and send thee hence from the house."

Then Odysseus of many counsels looked fiercely on her, and said: "Yea, straight will I go yonder and tell Telemachus hereof, thou shameless thing, for this thy speech, that forthwith he may cut thee limb from limb."

So he spake, and with his saying scared away the women, who fled through the halls, and the knees of each were loosened for fear, for they deemed that his words were true. But Odysseus took his stand by the burning braziers, tending the lights, and gazed on all the men: but far other matter he pondered in his heart, things not to be unfulfilled.

Now Athene would in no wise suffer the lordly wooers to abstain from biting scorn, that the pain might sink yet the deeper into the heart of Odysseus, son of Laertes. So Eurymachus, son of Polybus, began to speak among them, girding at Odysseus, and so made mirth for his friends:

"Hear me, ye wooers of the queen renowned, that I may say that which my spirit within me bids me. Not without the gods' will has this man come to the

house of Odysseus; methinks at least that the torch-light flares forth from that head of his, for there are no hairs on it, nay, never so thin."

He spake and withal addressed Odysseus, waster of cities: "Stranger, wouldest thou indeed be my hireling, if I would take thee for my man, at an upland farm, and thy wages shall be assured thee, and there shalt thou gather stones for dykes and plant tall trees? There would I provide thee bread continual, and clothe thee with raiment, and give thee shoes for thy feet. Howbeit, since thou art practised only in evil, thou wilt not care to go to the labours of the field, but wilt choose rather to go louting through the land, that thou mayest have wherewithal to feed thy insatiate belly."

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered him and said: "Eurymachus, would that there might be a trial of labour between us twain, in the season of spring, when the long days begin! In the deep grass might it be, and I should have a crooked scythe, and thou another like it, that we might try each the other in the matter of labour, fasting till late eventide, and grass there should be in plenty. Or would again, that there were oxen to drive, the best there may be, large and tawny, both well filled with fodder, of equal age and force to bear the yoke and of strength untiring! And it should be a field of four ploughgates, and the

clod should yield before the ploughshare. Then shouldest thou see me, whether or no I would cut a clean furrow unbroken before me. Or would that this very day Cronion might waken war whence he would, and that I had a shield and two spears, and a helmet all of bronze, close fitting on my temples! Then shouldest thou see me mingling in the forefront of the battle, nor speak and taunt me with this my belly. Nay, thou art exceeding wanton and thy heart is hard, and thou thinkest thyself some great one and mighty, because thou consortest with few men and feeble. Ah, if Odysseus might but return and come to his own country, right soon would yonder doors, full wide as they are, prove all too straight for thee in thy flight through the doorway!"

Thus he spake, and Eurymachus waxed yet the more wroth at heart, and looking fiercely on him spake to him winged words:

"Ah, wretch that thou art, right soon will I work thee mischief, so boldly thou pratest among many lords, and hast no fear of heart. Verily wine has got about thy wits, or perchance thou art always of this mind, and so thou dost babble idly. Art thou beside thyself for joy, because thou hast beaten the beggar Irus?"

Therewith he caught up a footstool, but Odysseus sat him down at the knees of Amphinomus of Dulich-

ium, in dread of Eurymachus. And Eurymachus cast and smote the cupbearer on the right hand, and the ladle cup dropped to the ground with a clang, while the young man groaned and fell backwards in the dust. Then the wooers clamoured through the shadowy halls, and thus one would say, looking to his neighbour:

"Would that our wandering guest had perished otherwhere, or ever he came hither; so should he never have made all this tumult in our midst! But now we are all at strife about beggars, and there will be no more joy of the good feast, for worse things have their way."

Then the mighty prince Telemachus spake among them:

"Sirs, ye are mad; now ye no longer hide it that ye have eaten and drunken; some one of the gods is surely moving you. Nay, now that ye have feasted well, go home and lay you to rest, whenso your spirit bids; for as for me, I drive no man hence."

Thus he spake, and they all bit their lips and marvelled at Telemachus, in that he spake boldly. Then Amphinomus made harangue, and spake among them, Amphinomus, the famous son of Nisus the prince, the son of Aretias:

"Friends, when a righteous word has been spoken, none surely would rebuke another with hard speech and be angry. Misuse ye not this stranger, neither

any of the thralls that are in the house of godlike Odysseus. But come, let the winebearer pour for libation into each cup in turn, that after the drink-offering we may get us home to bed. But the stranger let us leave in the halls of Odysseus for a charge to Telemachus, for to his home has he come."

Thus he spake, and his word was well-pleasing to them all. Then the lord Mulius mixed for them the bowl, the henchman out of Dulichium, who was squire of Amphinomus. And he stood by them all and served it to them in their turn; and they poured forth before the blessed gods, and drank the honey-sweet wine. Now when they had poured forth and had drunken to their heart's content, they departed to lie down, each one to his own house.

BOOK XIX

Telemachus removes the arms out of the hall. Odysseus discourseth with Penelope. And is known by his nurse, but concealed.

Now the goodly Odysseus was left behind in the hall, devising with Athene's aid the slaying of the wooers, and straightway he spake winged words to Telemachus:

"Telemachus, we must needs lay by the weapons of

war within, every one; and when the wooers miss them and ask thee concerning them, thou shalt beguile them with soft words."

Thus he spake, and Telemachus hearkened to his dear father, and called forth to him the nurse Eurykleia and spake to her saying:

"Nurse, come now, I pray thee, shut up the women in their chambers till I shall have laid by in the armoury the goodly weapons of my father, which all uncared for the smoke dims in the hall, since my father went hence, and I was still but a child. Now I wish to lay them by where the vapour of the fire will not reach them."

Then the good nurse Eurykleia answered him, saying: "Ah, my child, if ever thou wouldest but take careful thought in such wise as to mind the house, and guard all this wealth! But come, who shall attend thee and bear the light, if thou hast thy way, since thou wouldest not that the maidens, who might have given light, should go before thee?"

Then wise Telemachus made answer to her: "This stranger here, for I will keep no man in idleness who eats of my bread, even if he have come from afar."

Thus he spake, and his word unwinged abode with her, and she closed the doors of the fair-lying chambers. Then they twain sprang up, Odysseus and his renowned son, and set to carry within the helmets and the

bossy shields, and the sharp pointed spears; and before them Pallas Athene bare a golden cresset and cast a most lovely light. Thereon Telemachus spake to his father suddenly:

"Father, surely a great marvel is this that I behold with mine eyes; meseems, at least, that the walls of the hall and the fair main-beams of the roof and the cross-beams of pine, and the pillars that run aloft, are bright as it were with flaming fire. Verily some god is within, of those that hold the wide heaven."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him and said: "Hold thy peace and keep all this in thine heart and ask not hereof. Lo, this is the wont of the gods that hold Olympus. But do thou go and lay thee down, and I will abide here, that I may yet further provoke the maids and thy mother to answer; and she in her sorrow will ask me concerning each thing, one by one."

So he spake, and Telemachus passed out through the hall to his chamber to lie down, by the light of the flaming torches, even to the chamber where of old he took his rest, when sweet sleep came over him. There now too he lay down and awaited the bright Dawn. But goodly Odysseus was left behind in the hall, devising with Athene's aid the slaying of the wooers.

Now forth from her chamber came the wise Penelope,

like Artemis or golden Aphrodite, and they set a chair for her hard by before the fire, where she was wont to sit, a chair well wrought and inlaid with ivory and silver, which on a time the craftsman Icmalius had fashioned, and had joined thereto a footstool, that was part of the chair, whereon a great fleece was used to be laid. Here, then, the wise Penelope sat her down, and next came white-armed handmaids from the women's chamber, and began to take away the many fragments of food, and the tables and the cups whence the proud lords had been drinking, and they cast the embers from the braziers on the floor, and piled many fresh logs upon them, to give light and warmth.

Then Melantho began to revile Odysseus yet a second time, saying: "Stranger, wilt thou still be a plague to us here, wandering through the house in the night, and spying the women? Nay, get thee forth, thou wretched thing, and be content with thy supper, or straightway shalt thou even be smitten with a torch and so fare out of the doors."

Then Odysseus of many counsels looked fiercely on her, and said: "Good woman, what possesses thee to assail me thus out of an angry heart? Is it because I go filthy and am clothed about in sorry raiment, and beg through the land, for necessity is laid on me? This is the manner of beggars and of wandering men. For I too once had a house of mine own among men, a

rich man with a wealthy house, and many a time would I give to a wanderer, what manner of man soever he might be, and in whatsoever need he came. And I had countless thralls and all else in plenty, whereby folk live well and have a name for riches. But Zeus, the son of Cronos, made me desolate of all, for surely it was his will. Wherefore, woman, see that thou too lose not all the glory wherewith thou art now pre-eminent among the handmaids, as well may chance, if thy mistress be provoked to anger with thee, or if Odysseus come home, for there is yet a place for hope. And even if he hath perished as ye deem, and is never more to return, yet by Apollo's grace he hath so goodly a son, Telemachus, and none of the women works wantonness in his halls without his knowledge, for he is no longer of an age not to mark it."

Thus he spake, and the wise Penelope heard him, and rebuked the handmaid, and spake and hailed her:

"Thou shameless thing and unabashed, thy great sin is in no wise hidden from me, and thy blood shall be on thine own head for the same! For thou knewest right well, in that thou hadst heard it from my lips, how that I was minded to ask the stranger in my halls for tidings of my lord; for I am grievously afflicted."

Therewith she spake likewise to the house-dame, Eurynome, saying:

"Eurynome, bring hither a settle with a fleece there-

on, that the stranger may sit and speak with me and hear my words, for I would ask him all his story."

So she spake, and the nurse made haste and brought a polished settle, and cast a fleece thereon; and then the steadfast goodly Odysseus sat him down there, and the wise Penelope spake first, saying:

"Stranger, I will make bold first to ask thee this: who art thou of the sons of men, and whence? Where is thy city, and where are they that begat thee?"

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her and said: "Lady, no one of mortal men in the wide world could find fault with thee, for thy fame goes up to the wide heaven, as doth the fame of a blameless king, one that fears the gods and reigns among many men and mighty, maintaining right, and the black earth bears wheat and barley, and the trees are laden with fruit, and the sheep bring forth and fail not, and the sea gives store of fish, and all out of his good guidance, and the people prosper under him. Wherefore do thou ask me now in thy house all else that thou wilt, but inquire not concerning my race and mine own country, lest as I think thereupon thou fill my heart the more with pains, for I am a man of many sorrows. Moreover, it beseems me not to sit weeping and wailing in another's house, for it is little good to mourn always without ceasing, lest perchance one of the maidens, or even thyself, be angry with me and say that I swim in tears, as one that is heavy with wine."

Then wise Penelope answered him, and said: "Stranger, surely my goodliness both of face and form the gods destroyed, in the day when the Argives embarked for Ilios, and with them went my lord Odysseus. If but he might come and watch over this my life, greater and fairer thus would be my fame! But now am I in sorrow, such a host of ills some god has sent against me. For all the noblest that are princes in the isles, in Dulichium and Same and wooded Zacynthus, and they that dwell around even in clear-seen Ithaca, these are wooing me against my will, and devouring the house. Wherefore I take no heed of strangers, nor suppliants, nor at all of heralds, the craftsmen of the people. But I waste my heart away in longing for Odysseus; so they speed on my marriage and I weave a web of wiles. But even so tell me of thine own stock, whence thou art, for thou art not sprung of oak or rock, whereof old tales tell."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her and said:

"O wife revered of Odysseus, son of Laertes, thou wilt never have done asking me about mine own race. Nay, but I will tell thee: yet surely thou wilt give me over to sorrows yet more than those wherein I am holden, for so it ever is when a man has been afar from his own country for so long as now I am, wandering in sore pain to many cities of mortals."

So he told many a false tale in the likeness of truth, and her tears flowed as she listened, and her flesh melted. And even as the snow melts in the high places of the hills, the snow that the South-East wind has thawed, when the West has scattered it abroad, and as it wastes the river streams run full, even so her fair cheeks melted beneath her tears, as she wept her own lord, who even then was sitting by her. Now Odysseus had compassion of heart upon his wife in her lamenting, but his eyes kept steadfast between his eyelids, as it were horn or iron, and craftily he hid his tears. But she, when she had taken her fill of tearful lamentation, answered him in turn and spake, saying:

"Friend as thou art, even now I think to make trial of thee, and learn whether in very truth thou didst entertain my lord there in thy halls with his godlike company, as thou sayest. Tell me what manner of raiment he was clothed in about his body, and what manner of man he was himself, and tell me of his fellows that went with him."

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered her, saying: "Lady, it is hard for one so long parted from him to tell thee all this for it is now the twentieth year since he went thither and left my country. Yet even so I will tell thee as I see him in spirit. Goodly Odysseus wore a thick purple mantle, twofold, which had a brooch fashioned in gold, with a double covering for

the pins, and on the face of it was a curious device: a hound in his forepaws held a dappled fawn and gazed on it as it writhed. And all men marvelled at the workmanship, how, wrought as they were in gold, the hound was gazing on the fawn and strangling it, and the fawn was writhing with his feet and striving to flee. Moreover, I marked the shining doublet about his body, as it were the skin of a dried onion, so smooth it was, and glistering as the sun; truly many women looked thereon and wondered. I know not if Odysseus was thus clothed upon at home, or if one of his fellows gave him the raiment as he went on board the swift ship, or even it may be some stranger, seeing that to many men was Odysseus dear, for few of the Achæans were his peers. I, too, gave him a sword of bronze, and a fair purple mantle with double fold, and a tasseled doublet, and I sent him away with all honour on his decked ship. Moreover, a henchman bare him company, somewhat older than he, and I will tell thee of him too, what manner of man he was. He was round-shouldered, brown-skinned, and curly-haired, his name Eurybates; and Odysseus honoured him above all his company, because in all things he was likeminded with himself."

So he spake, and in her heart he stirred yet more the desire of weeping, as she knew the certain tokens that Odysseus showed her. So when she had taken her fill

of tearful lament, then she answered him, and spake, saying:

"Now verily, stranger, thou that even before wert held in pity, shalt be dear and honourable in my halls, for it was I who gave him these garments, even such as thou namest, and folded them myself, and brought them from the chamber, and added besides the shining brooch to be his jewel. But him I shall never welcome back, returned home to his own dear country. Wherefore with an evil fate it was that Odysseus went hence in the hollow ship to see that evil Ilios, never to be named."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her, saying: "Wife revered of Odysseus, son of Laertes, destroy not now thy fair flesh any more, nor waste thy heart with weeping for thy lord:—not that I count it any blame in thee, for many a woman weeps that has lost her wedded lord, to whom she has borne children in her love,—albeit a far other man than Odysseus, who, they say, is like the gods. Nay, cease from thy lamenting, and lay up my word in thy heart; for I will tell thee without fail, and will hide nought, how but lately I heard tell of the return of Odysseus, that he is nigh at hand, and yet alive in the fat land of the men of Thesprotia, and is bringing with him many choice treasures, as he begs through the land. But he has lost his dear companions and his hollow ship on the wine-

dark sea, on his way from the isle Thrinacia: for Zeus and Helios had a grudge against him, because his company had slain the kine of Helios. They for their part all perished in the wash of the sea, but the wave cast him on the keel of the ship out upon the coast, on the land of the Phæacians that are near of kin to the gods, and they did him all honour heartily as unto a god, and gave him many gifts, and themselves would fain have sent him scathless home. Yea, and Odysseus would have been here long since, but he thought it more profitable to gather wealth, as he journeyed over wide lands; so truly is Odysseus skilled in gainful arts above all men upon earth, nor may any mortal men contend with him. So Pheidon king of the Thesprotians told me. Moreover, he sware, in mine own presence, as he poured the drink-offering in his house, that the ship was drawn down to the sea and his company were ready, who were to convey him to his own dear country. But me he first sent off, for it chanced that a ship of the Thesprotians was on her way to Dulichium, a land rich in grain. And he showed me all the wealth that Odysseus had gathered, yea, it would suffice for his children after him, even to the tenth generation, so great were the treasures he had stored in the chambers of the king. As for him he had gone, he said, to Dodona to hear the counsel of Zeus, from the high leafy oak tree of the god, how he should

return to his own dear country, having now been long afar, whether openly or by stealth.

"In this wise, as I tell thee, he is safe and will come shortly, and very near he is and will not much longer be far from his friends and his own country; yet withal I will give thee my oath on it. Zeus be my witness first, of gods the highest and best, and the hearth of noble Odysseus whereunto I am come, that all these things shall surely be accomplished even as I tell thee. In this same year Odysseus shall come hither, as the old moon wanes and the new is born."

Then wise Penelope answered him: "Ah, stranger, would that this word may be accomplished! Soon shouldest thou be aware of kindness and many a gift at my hands, so that whoso met with thee would call thee blessed. But on this wise my heart has a boding, and so it shall be. Neither shall Odysseus come home any more, nor shalt thou gain an escort hence, since there are not now such masters in the house as Odysseus was among men,—if ever such an one there was,—to welcome guests revered and speed them on their way. But do ye, my handmaids, wash this man's feet and lay a bed for him, mattress and mantles and shining blankets, that well and warmly he may come to the time of golden-throned Dawn. And very early in the morning bathe him and anoint him, that within the house beside Telemachus he may eat meat, sitting

quietly in the hall. And it shall be the worse for any hurtful man of the wooers, that vexes the stranger, yea, he shall not henceforth profit himself here, for all his sore anger. For how shalt thou learn concerning me, stranger, whether indeed I excel all women in wit and thrifty device, if all unkempt and evil clad thou sittest at supper in my halls? Man's life is brief enough! And if any be a hard man and hard at heart, all men cry evil on him for the time to come, while yet he lives, and all men mock him when he is dead. But if any be a blameless man and blameless of heart, his guests noise his wide fame abroad, and many call him excellent."

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered her and said: "O wife revered of Odysseus, son of Laertes, mantles verily and shining blankets are hateful to me, since first I left behind me the snowy hills of Crete, voyaging in the long-oared galley; nay, I will lie as in time past I was used to rest through the sleepless nights. For full many a night I have lain on an unsightly bed, and awaited the bright-throned Dawn. And baths for the feet are no longer my delight, nor shall any women of those who are serving maidens in thy house touch my foot, unless there chance to be some old wife, true of heart, one that has borne as much trouble as myself; I would not grudge such an one to touch my feet."

Then wise Penelope answered him: "Dear stranger,

for there has been none ever so discreet as thou, nor dearer, of all the strangers from afar that have come to my house, so clearly thou speakest all things prudently; I have such an ancient woman of an understanding heart, that diligently nursed that hapless man my lord, and cherished him and took him in her arms, in the hour when his mother bare him. She will wash thy feet albeit she is weak with age. Up now, wise Eurykleia, and wash this man, who is of like age with thy master. Yea, and perchance such even now are the feet of Odysseus, and such too his hands, for men quickly age in evil fortune."

So she spake, and the old woman covered her face with her hands and shed warm tears, and spake a word of lamentation, saying:

"Ah, woe is me, child, for thy sake, all helpless that I am! Surely Zeus hated thee above all men, though thou hadst a god-fearing spirit! For never yet did any mortal burn so many fat pieces of the thigh and so many choice hecatombs to Zeus, whose joy is in the thunder, as thou didst give to him, with prayers that so thou mightest grow to a smooth old age and rear thy renowned son. But now from thee alone hath Zeus wholly cut off the day of thy returning. Haply at him too did the women mock in a strange land afar, whensoever he came to the famous palace of any lord, even as here these shameless ones all mock at thee. To shun

their insults and many taunts it is that thou sufferest them not to wash thy feet, but the daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, hath bidden me that am right willing to this task. Wherefore I will wash thy feet, both for Penelope's sake and for thine own, for that my heart within me is moved with pity. But come, mark the word that I shall speak. Many strangers travel-worn have ere now come hither, but I say that I have never seen any so like another, as thou art like Odysseus, in fashion, in voice and in feet."

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered her, saying: "Old wife, even so all men declare, that have beheld us twain, that we favour each other exceedingly, even as thou dost mark and say."

Thereupon the crone took the shining cauldron, which she used for the washing of feet, and poured in much cold water and next mingled therewith the warm. Now Odysseus sat aloof from the hearth, and of a sudden he turned his face to the darkness, for anon he had a misgiving of heart lest when she handled him she might know the scar again, and all should be revealed. Now she drew near her lord to wash him, and straightway she knew the scar of the wound, that the boar had dealt him with his white tusk long ago.

Now the old woman took the scarred limb and passed her hands down it, and knew it by the touch and let the foot drop suddenly, so that the knee fell into the

bath, and the brazen vessel rang, being turned over on the other side, and behold, the water was spilled on the ground. Then grief and joy came on her in one moment, and both her eyes filled up with tears, and the voice of her utterance was stayed, and touching the chin of Odysseus she spake to him, saying:

"Yea verily, thou art Odysseus, my dear child, and I knew thee not before, till I handled the body of my lord."

Therewithal she looked toward Penelope, as minded to make a sign that her husband was now home. But Penelope could not meet her eyes nor take note of her, for Athene had bent her thoughts to other things. But Odysseus feeling for the old woman's throat seized it with his right hand and with the other drew her closer to him and spake, saying:

"Woman, why wouldest thou indeed destroy me? It was thou that didst nurse me there at thine own breast, and now after travail and much pain I am come in the twentieth year to mine own country. But since thou art ware of me, and the god has put this in thy heart, be silent, lest another learn the matter in the halls. For on this wise I will declare it, and it shall surely be accomplished:—If the gods subdue the lordly wooers unto me, I will not hold my hand from thee, my nurse though thou art, when I slay the other handmaids in my halls."

Then wise Eurykleia answered, saying: "My child what word hath escaped the door of thy lips? Thou knowest how firm is my spirit and unyielding, and I will keep me close as hard stone or iron. Yet another thing will I tell thee, and do thou ponder it in thine heart. If the gods subdue the lordly wooers to thy hand, then will I tell thee all the tale of the women in the halls, which of them dishonour thee and which be guiltless."

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered her, saying: "Nurse, wherefore, I pray thee, wilt thou speak of these? Thou needest not, for even I myself will mark them well and take knowledge of each. Nay, do thou keep thy saying to thyself, and leave the rest to the gods."

Even so he spake, and the old woman passed forth from the hall to bring water for his feet, for that first water was all spilled. So when she had washed him and anointed him well with olive-oil, Odysseus again drew up his settle nearer to the fire to warm himself, and covered up the scar with his rags. Then the wise Penelope spake first, saying:

"Stranger, there is yet a little thing I will make bold to ask thee, for soon will it be the hour for pleasant rest, for him on whomsoever sweet sleep falls, though he be heavy with care. But to me has the god given sorrow, yea, sorrow measureless, for all the day I have

my fill of wailing and lamenting, as I look to mine own housewiferies and to the tasks of the maidens in the house. But when night comes and sleep takes hold of all, I lie on my couch, and shrewd cares, thick thronging about my inmost heart, disquiet me in my sorrowing. Even as when the daughter of Pandareus, the brown bright nightingale, sings sweet in the first season of the spring, from her place in the thick leafage of the trees, and with many a turn and trill she pours forth her full-voiced music bewailing her child, dear Itylus, whom on a time she slew with the sword unwitting, Itylus the son of Zethus the prince; even as her song, my troubled soul sways to and fro. Shall I abide with my son, and keep all secure, all the things of my getting, my thralls and great high-roofed home, having respect unto the bed of my lord and the voice of the people, or even now follow with the best of the Achæans that woos me in halls, and gives a bride-price beyond reckoning? Now my son, so long as he was a child and light of heart, would not suffer me to marry and leave the house of my husband; but now that he is great of growth, and is come to the full measure of manhood, even now he prays me to go back again from these halls, being vexed for his possessions that the Achæans devour before his eyes. But come now, hear a dream of mine and tell me the interpretation thereof. Twenty geese I have in the house, that eat wheat out

of the water-trough, and it gladdens me to look on them. Now a great eagle of crooked beak came forth from the mountain, and brake all their necks and slew them; and they lay strewn in a heap in the halls, while he was borne aloft to the bright air. Thereon I wept and wailed, in a dream though it was, and around me were gathered the fair-tressed Achæan women as I made piteous lament, for that the eagle had slain my geese. But he came back and sat him down on a jutting point of the roof beam, and with the voice of a man he spake, and stayed my weeping:

"'Take heart, O daughter of renowned Icarius; this is no dream but a true vision, that shall be accomplished for thee. The geese are the wooers, and I that before was the eagle am now thy husband come again, who will let slip unsightly death upon all the wooers.' With that word sweet slumber let me go, and I looked about, and beheld the geese in the court devouring the wheat by the trough, where they had been before."

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered her and said: "Lady, none may turn aside the dream to interpret it otherwise, seeing that Odysseus himself is showing thee how he will fulfil it. For the wooers destruction is clearly boded, for all and every one; not a man shall avoid death and the fates."

Then wise Penelope answered him: "Stranger, verily dreams are hard, and hard to be discerned; nor

are all things therein fulfilled for men. Twain are the gates of shadowy dreams, the one is fashioned of horn and one of ivory. Such dreams as pass through the portals of sawn ivory are deceitful, and bear tidings that are unfulfilled. But the dreams that come forth through the gates of polished horn bring a true issue, whosoever of mortals beholds them. Yet methinks my strange dream came not thence; of a truth that would be most welcome to me and to my son. But another thing will I tell thee, and do thou ponder it in thy heart. Lo, even now draws nigh the morn of evil name, that is to sever me from the house of Odysseus, for now I am about to ordain for a trial those axes that he was wont to set up in his halls, like the stays of oak in ship-building, twelve in all, and he would stand far apart and shoot his arrow through them all.[1] And now I will offer this contest to the wooers: Whoso shall most easily string the bow in his hands, and shoot through all twelve axes, with him will I go and forsake this house, this house of my wedlock, so fair and filled with all livelihood, which methinks I shall yet remember, aye, in a dream."

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered her and said: "Wife revered of Odysseus, son of Laertes, no longer delay this contest in thy halls; for, lo, Odysseus

[1] [That is, through the holes in the openwork of the blades.]

of many counsels will be here, before these men, for all their handling of the polished bow, shall have strung it, and shot the arrow through the iron."

Then the wise Penelope answered him: "Stranger, if only thou wert willing still to sit beside me in the halls and to delight me, not upon my eyelids would sleep be shed. But men may in no wise abide sleepless ever, for the immortals have made a time for all things for mortals on the earth, the grain-giver. Howbeit I will go aloft to my upper chamber, and lay me on my bed, the place of my groanings, that is ever watered by my tears, since the day that Odysseus went to see that evil Ilios, never to be named. There will I lay me down, but do thou lie in this house; either strew thee somewhat on the floor, or let them lay bedding for thee."

Therewith she ascended to her shining upper chamber, not alone, for with her likewise went her handmaids. So she went aloft to her upper chamber with the women her handmaids, and there was bewailing Odysseus, her dear lord, till grey-eyed Athene cast sweet sleep upon her eyelids.

BOOK XX

Pallas and Odysseus consult of the killing of the wooers.

Now the goodly Odysseus laid him down to sleep in the outer gallery of the house. He spread an undressed bull's hide on the ground and above it many fleeces of sheep, that the Achæans were wont to slay in sacrifice, and Eurynome threw a mantle over him where he lay. But Odysseus himself lay tossing this way and that. And as when a man by a great fire burning takes a paunch full of fat and blood, and turns it this way and that and longs to have it roasted most speedily, so Odysseus tossed from side to side, musing how he might stretch forth his hands upon the shameless wooers, being but one man against so many. Then down from heaven came Athene and drew nigh him, fashioned in the likeness of a woman. And she stood over his head and spake to him, saying:

"Lo now again, wherefore art thou watching, most luckless of all men living? Is not this thy house and is not thy wife there within and thy child, such a son as men wish to have for their own?"

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered her, saying: "Yea, goddess, all this thou hast spoken as is meet. But my heart within me muses in some measure upon this, how I may stretch forth my hands upon the shameless wooers, being but one man while they abide ever in

their companies within. Moreover, this other and harder matter I ponder in my heart: Even if I were to slay them by thy will and the will of Zeus, whither should I flee from the avengers? Look well to this, I pray thee."

Then answered the goddess, grey-eyed Athene: "O hard of belief! Yea, many there be that trust even in a weaker friend than I am, in one that is a mortal and knows not such craft as mine; but I am a god, that preserves thee to the end, in all manner of toils. And now I will tell thee plainly; even should fifty companies of mortal men compass us about eager to slay us in battle, even their kine shouldest thou drive off and their brave flocks. But let sleep in turn come over thee; to wake and to watch all night, this too is vexation of spirit; and soon shalt thou rise from out thy troubles."

So she spake and poured slumber upon his eyelids; but for her part the fair goddess went back to Olympus.

While sleep laid hold of him loosening the cares of his soul, sleep that loosens the limbs of men, his good wife awoke and wept as she sat on her soft bed. But when she had taken her fill of weeping, to Artemis first the fair lady made her prayer:

"Artemis, lady and goddess, daughter of Zeus, would that even now thou wouldest plant thy shaft within my breast and take my life away, even in this hour! Or else, would that the stormwind might snatch

me up, and bear me hence down the dusky ways, and cast me forth where the back-flowing Oceanus mingles with sea. Would that in such wise they that hold the mansions of Olympus would take me from the sight of men, or that fair-tressed Artemis would strike me, that so with a vision of Odysseus before mine eyes I might even pass beneath the dreadful earth, nor ever make a baser man's delight! But herein is an evil that may well be borne; namely, when a man weeps all the day long in great sorrow of heart, but sleep takes him in the night, for sleep makes him forgetful of all things, of good and evil, when once it has overshadowed his eyelids. But as for me, even the dreams that the gods send upon me are evil. For furthermore, this very night one seemed to lie by my side, in the likeness of my lord, as he was when he went with the host, and then was my heart glad, since methought it was no vain dream but a clear vision at the last."

So she spake, and anon came the golden-throned Dawn. Now goodly Odysseus caught the voice of her weeping, and then he fell a-musing, and it seemed to him that even now she knew him and was standing by his head. So he took up the mantle and the fleeces whereon he was lying, and set them on a high seat in the hall, and bare out the bull's hide out of doors and laid it there, and lifting up his hands he prayed to Zeus:

"Father Zeus, if ye gods of your good will have led me over wet and dry, to mine own country, after ye had plagued me sore, let some one, I pray, of the folk that are waking show me a word of good omen within, and without let some other sign be revealed to me from Zeus."

So he spake in prayer, and Zeus, the counsellor, heard him. Straightway he thundered from shining Olympus, from on high from the place of clouds; and goodly Odysseus was glad. Moreover, a woman, a grinder at the mill, uttered a voice of omen from within the house hard by, where stood the mills of the shepherd of the people. At these handmills twelve women in all were wont to bestir themselves, making meal of barley and of wheat, the marrow of men. Now all the others were asleep, for they had ground out their task of grain, but this one alone rested not yet, being the weakest of all. She now stayed her quern[1] and spake a word, a sign to her lord:

"Father Zeus, who rulest over gods and men, loudly hast thou thundered from the starry sky, yet nowhere is there a cloud to be seen: this surely is a portent thou art showing to some mortal. Fulfil now, I pray thee, even to miserable me, the word that I shall speak. May the wooers, on this day, for the last and latest time make their sweet feasting in the halls of Odysseus!

[1] [Mill.]

They that have loosened my knees with cruel toil to grind their barley meal, may they now sup their last!"

Thus she spake, and goodly Odysseus was glad in the omen of the voice and in the thunder of Zeus; for he thought that he had gotten his vengeance on the guilty.

Now the other maidens in the fair halls of Odysseus had gathered, and were kindling on the hearth the never-resting fire. And Telemachus rose from his bed, a godlike man, and put on his raiment, and slung a sharp sword about his shoulders, and beneath his shining feet he bound his goodly sandals. And he caught up his mighty spear shod with sharp bronze, and went and stood by the threshold, and spake to Eurykleia:

"Dear nurse, have ye honoured our guest in the house with food and couch, or does he lie uncared for, as he may? For this is my mother's way, wise as she is: Blindly she honours one of mortal men, even the worse, but the better she sends without honour away."

Then the prudent Eurykleia answered: "Nay, my child, thou shouldest not now blame her where no blame is. For the stranger sat and drank wine, so long as he would, and of food he said he was no longer fain, for thy mother asked him. Moreover, against the hour when he should bethink him of rest and sleep, she bade the maidens strew for him a bed. But he, as one utterly wretched and ill-fated, refused to lie on a couch and

under blankets, but on an undressed hide and on the fleeces of sheep he slept in the outer gallery, and we cast a mantle over him."

So she spake, and Telemachus passed out through the hall with his lance in his hand, and two fleet dogs bare him company. He went on his way to the assembly place to join the goodly-greaved Achæans. But the good lady Eurykleia called aloud to her maidens:

"Come hither, let some of you go busily and sweep the hall, and sprinkle it, and on the fair-fashioned seats throw purple coverlets, and others with sponges wipe all the tables clean, and cleanse the mixing bowls and well-wrought double beakers, and others again go for water to the well, and return with it right speedily. For the wooers will not long be out of the hall but will return very early, for it is a feast day, yea for all the people."

So she spake, and they gave ready ear and hearkened. Twenty of them went to the well of dark water, and the others there in the halls were busy with skilful hands.

Then in came the serving men of the Achæans. Thereon they cleft the faggots well and cunningly, while, behold, the women came back from the well. Then the swineherd joined them, leading three fatted boars, the best in all the flock. These he left to feed at large in the fair courts, but as for him he spake to Odysseus gently, saying:

"Tell me, stranger, do the Achæans at all look on thee with more regard, or do they dishonour thee in the halls, as heretofore?"

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying:

"Oh, that the gods, Eumæus, may avenge the scorn where with these men deal insolently, and devise infatuate deeds in another's house, and know no touch of shame!"

On such wise they spake one to another. And Melanthius drew near them, the goatherd, leading the goats that were most excellent in all the herds to be dinner for the wooers, and two shepherds bare him company. So he tethered the goats beneath the echoing gallery, and himself spake to Odysseus and taunted him, saying:

"Stranger, wilt thou still be a plague to us here in the hall, with thy begging of men, and wilt not get thee gone? In no wise do I think we twain will be sundered, till we taste each the other's fists, for thy begging is out of all order. Also there are elsewhere other feasts of the Achæans."

So he spake, but Odysseus of many counsels answered him not a word, but in silence he shook his head, brooding evil in the deep of his heart.

Moreover, a third man came up, Philœtius, a master of men, leading a barren heifer for the wooers and

fatted goats. The cattle he tethered carefully beneath the echoing gallery, and himself drew close to the swineherd, and began to question him:

"Swineherd, who is this stranger but newly come to our house? From what men does he claim his birth? Where are his kin and his native fields? Hapless is he, yet in fashion he is like a royal lord; but the gods mar the goodliness of wandering men, when even for kings they have woven the web of trouble."

So he spake, and came close to him offering his right hand in welcome, and uttering his voice spake to him winged words:

"Father and stranger, hail! May happiness be thine in the time to come; but as now, thou art fast holden in many sorrows! Father Zeus, none other god is more baneful than thou; thou hast no compassion on men, that are thine own begetting, but makest them to have fellowship with evil and with bitter pains. The sweat brake out on me when I beheld him, and mine eyes stand full of tears for memory of Odysseus, for he too, methinks, is clad in such vile raiment as this, and is wandering among men, if haply he yet lives and sees the sunlight. But if he be dead already and in the house of Hades, then woe is me for the noble Odysseus, who set me over his cattle while I was but a lad in the land of the Cephallenians. And now these wax numberless; in no better wise could the breed of broad-browed

cattle of any mortal increase, even as the ears of corn. But strangers command me to be ever driving these for themselves to devour, and they care nothing for the heir in the house, nor tremble at the vengeance of the gods, for they are eager even now to divide among themselves the possessions of our lord who is long afar. Now my heart within my breast often revolves this thing. Truly it were an evil deed, while a son of the master is yet alive, to get me away to the land of strangers, and go off, with cattle and all, to alien men. But this is more grievous still, to abide here in affliction watching over the herds of other men. Yea, long ago I would have fled and gone forth to some other of the proud kings, for things are now past sufferance; but still my thought is of that hapless one, if he might come I know not whence, and make a scattering of the wooers in the halls."

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying:

"Neatherd, seeing thou art not like to an evil man or a foolish, and of myself I mark how that thou hast gotten understanding of heart, therefore I will tell thee somewhat, and swear a great oath to confirm it. Be Zeus now my witness before any god, and the hospitable board and the heart of noble Odysseus, whereunto I am come, that while thou art still in this place Odysseus shall come home, and thou shalt see with thine

eyes, if thou wilt, the slaying of the wooers who lord it here."

Then the neatherd made answer, saying:

"Ah, would, stranger, that Cronion may accomplish this word! So shouldest thou know what thy might is, and how my hands follow to obey."

In like manner Eumæus prayed to all the gods, that wise Odysseus might return to his own home.

On such wise they spake one to the other, but the wooers at that time were framing death and doom for Telemachus. Even so there came by them a bird on their left, an eagle of lofty flight, with a cowering dove in his clutch. Then Amphinomus made harangue and spake among them:

"Friends, this counsel of ours will not go well; namely, the slaying of Telemachus; rather let us bethink us of the feast."

So spake Amphinomus, and his saying pleased them well. They passed into the halls of godlike Odysseus and laid by their mantles on the chairs and high seats, and sacrificed great sheep and stout goats and the fatlings of the boars and the heifer of the herd; then they roasted the entrails and served them round and mixed wine in the bowl, and the swineherd set a cup by each man. And Philœtius, a master of men, handed them wheaten bread in beautiful baskets, and Melanthius poured out the wine. So they put forth their hands on the good cheer set before them.

Now Telemachus, in his crafty purpose, made Odysseus to sit down within the established hall by the threshold of stone, and placed for him a mean settle and a little table. He set by him his mess of the entrails, and poured wine into a golden cup and spake to him, saying:

"There, sit thee down, drinking thy wine among the lords, and the taunts and buffets of all the wooers I myself will ward off from thee, for this is no house of public resort, but the very house of Odysseus, and for me he won it. But, ye wooers, refrain your minds from rebukes and your hands from buffets, that no strife and feud may arise."

So he said, and they all bit their lips and marvelled at Telemachus, in that he spake boldly. Then Antinoüs, son of Eupeithes, spake among them, saying:

"Hard though the word be, let us accept it, Achæans, even the word of Telemachus, though mightily he threatens us in his speech. For Zeus Cronion hath hindered us of our purpose, else would we have silenced him in our halls, shrill orator as he is."

So spake Antinoüs, but Telemachus took no heed of his words. Now the henchmen were leading through the town the holy hecatomb of the gods, and lo, the long-haired Achæans were gathered beneath the shady grove of Apollo, the prince of archery.

Now when they had roasted the outer flesh and drawn it off the spits, they divided the messes and

shared the glorious feast. And beside Odysseus they that waited set an equal share, the same as that which fell to themselves, for so Telemachus commanded, the dear son of divine Odysseus.

Now Athene would in no wise suffer the lordly wooers to abstain from biting scorn, that the pain might sink yet the deeper into the heart of Odysseus, son of Laertes. There was among the wooers a man of a lawless heart, Ctesippus was his name, and in Same was his home, who, trusting, forsooth, to his vast possessions, was wooing the wife of Odysseus the lord long afar. And now he spake among the proud wooers:

"Hear me, ye lordly wooers, and I will say somewhat. The stranger verily has long had his due portion, as is meet, an equal share; for it is not fair nor just to rob the guests of Telemachus of their right, whosoever they may be that come to this house. Go to then, I also will bestow on him a stranger's gift, that he in turn may give a present either to the bath-woman, or to any other of the thralls within the house of godlike Odysseus."

Therewith he caught up an ox's foot from the dish, where it lay, and hurled it with strong hand. But Odysseus lightly avoided it with a turn of his head, and smiled right grimly in his heart, and the ox's foot smote the well-builded wall. Then Telemachus rebuked Ctesippus, saying:

"Verily, Ctesippus, it has turned out happier for thy heart's pleasure as it is! Thou didst not smite the stranger, for he himself avoided that which was cast at him, else surely would I have struck thee through the midst with the sharp spear, and in place of wedding banquet thy father would have had to busy him about a funeral feast in this place. Wherefore let no man make show of unseemly deeds in this my house, for now I have understanding to discern both good and evil, but in time past I was yet a child. But as needs we must, we still endure to see these deeds, while sheep are slaughtered and wine drunken and bread devoured, for hard it is for one man to restrain many. But come, no longer work me harm out of an evil heart; but if ye be set on slaying me, even me, with the sword, even that would I rather endure, and far better would it be to die than to witness for ever these unseemly deeds—strangers shamefully entreated, and men haling the handmaidens in foul wise through the fair house."

So he spake, and they were all hushed in silence. And late and at last spake among them Agalaus, son of Damastor:

"Friends, when a righteous word has been spoken, none surely would rebuke another with hard speech and be angry. Misuse ye not this stranger, nor any of the thralls that are in the house of godlike Odysseus. But to Telemachus himself I would speak a soft word and

to his mother, if perchance it may find favour with the mind of those twain. So long as your hearts within you had hope of the wise Odysseus returning to his own house, so long none could be wroth that ye waited and held back the wooers in the halls, for better had it been if Odysseus had returned and come back to his own home. But now the event is plain, that he will return no more. Go then, sit by thy mother and tell her all, namely, that she must wed the best man that woos her, and whoso gives most gifts; so shalt thou with gladness live on the heritage of thy father, eating and drinking, while she cares for another's house."

Then wise Telemachus answered, and said: "Nay, by Zeus, Agelaus, and by the griefs of my father, who far away methinks from Ithaca has perished or goes wandering, in no wise do I delay my mother's marriage; nay, I bid her be married to what man she will, and withal I offer gifts without number. But I do indeed feel shame to drive her forth from the hall, despite her will, by a word of compulsion; God forbid that ever this should be."

So spake Telemachus, but among the wooers Pallas Athene roused laughter unquenchable, and drave their wits wandering. And now they were laughing with alien lips, and blood-bedabbled was the flesh they ate, and their eyes were filled with tears and their soul was fain of lamentation.

Now the daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, had set her fair chair over against them, and heard the words of each one of the men in the halls. For in the midst of laughter they had got ready the mid-day meal, a sweet meal and abundant, for they had sacrificed many cattle. But never could there be a banquet less gracious than that supper, such an one as the goddess and the brave man were soon to spread for them; for that they had begun the devices of shame.

BOOK XXI

Penelope bringeth forth her husband's bow, which the suitors could not bend, but was bent by Odysseus.

Now the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, put it into the heart of the daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, to set the bow and the axes of grey iron, for the wooers in the halls of Odysseus, to be the weapons of the contest, and the beginning of death. So she climbed the tall staircase of her chamber, and took the well-bent key in her strong hand, a goodly key of bronze, whereon was a handle of ivory. And she betook her, with her hand-maidens, to the treasure-chamber in the uttermost part of the house, where lay the treasures of her lord, bronze and gold and well-wrought iron. And there lay the back-bent bow and the quiver for the arrows, and

many shafts were therein, winged for death, gifts of a friend of Odysseus, that met with him in Lacedæmon, Iphitus, son of Eurytus, a man like to the gods.

Now when the fair lady had come even to the treasure-chamber, and had stept upon the threshold of oak, which the carpenter had on a time planed cunningly, and over it had made straight the line,—doorposts also had he fitted thereby, whereon he set shining doors, —anon she quickly loosen the strap from the handle of the door, and thrust in the key, and with a straight aim shot back the bolts. And even as a bull roars that is grazing in a meadow, so mightily roared the fair doors smitten by the key; and speedily they flew open before her. Then she stept on to the high floor, where the coffers stood, wherein the fragrant raiment was stored. Thence she stretched forth her hand, and took the bow from off the pin, all in the bright case which sheathed it around. And there she sat down, and set the case upon her knees, and cried aloud and wept, and took out the bow of her lord. Now when she had her fill of tearful lament, she set forth to go to the hall to the company of the proud wooers, with the back-bent bow in her hands, and the quiver for the arrows, and many shafts were therein winged for death. And her maidens along with her bare a chest, wherein lay much store of iron and bronze, the gear of combat of their lord. Now when the fair lady had come unto the

wooers, she stood by the doorpost of the well-builded roof, holding up her glistering tire before her face; and a faithful maiden stood on either side of her, and straightway she spake out among the wooers and declared her word, saying:

"Hear me, ye lordly wooers, who have vexed this house, that ye might eat and drink here evermore, forasmuch as the master is long gone, nor could ye find any other mark for your speech, but all your desire was to wed me and take me to wife. Nay, come now, ye wooers, seeing that this is the prize that is put before you. I will set forth for you the great bow of divine Odysseus, and whoso shall most easily string the bow in his hands, and shoot through all twelve axes, with him will I go and forsake this house, this house of my wedlock, so fair and filled with all livelihood, which methinks I shall yet remember, aye, in a dream."

So spake she, and commanded Eumæus, the goodly swineherd, to set the bow for the wooers and the axes of grey iron. And Eumæus took them with tears, and laid them down; and otherwhere the neatherd wept, when he beheld the bow of his lord. Then Antinoüs rebuked them, and spake and hailed them:

"Foolish boors, whose thoughts look not beyond the day, ah, wretched pair, wherefore now do ye shed tears, and stir the soul of the lady within her, when her heart already lies low in pain, for that she has lost her dear

lord? Nay, sit and feast in silence, or else get ye forth and weep, and leave the bow here behind, to be a terrible contest for the wooers, for methinks that this polished bow does not lightly yield itself to be strung. For there is no man among all these present such as Odysseus was, and I myself saw him, yea, I remember it well, though I was still but a child."

So spake he, but his heart within him hoped that he would string the bow, and shoot through the iron. Yet verily, he was to be the first that should taste the arrow at the hands of the noble Odysseus, whom but late he was dishonouring as he sat in the halls, and was inciting all his fellows to do likewise.

Then the mighty prince Telemachus spake among them saying: "Lo now, in very truth, Cronion has robbed me of my wits! My dear mother, wise as she is, declares that she will go with a stranger and forsake his house; yet I laugh and in my silly heart I am glad. Nay, come now, ye wooers, seeing that this is the prize which is set before you, a lady, the like of whom there is not now in the Achæan land, neither in sacred Pylos, nor in Argos, nor in Mycenæ, nor yet in Ithaca, nor in the dark mainland. Nay, but ye know all this yourselves,—why need I praise my mother? Come, therefore, delay not the issue with excuses, nor hold much longer aloof from the drawing of the bow, that we may see the thing that is to be. Yea, and I myself would

make trial of this bow. If I shall string it, and shoot through the iron, my lady mother will not quit these halls to my grief, and go with a stranger while I am left behind, being now well able to lift my father's goodly gear of combat."

Therewith he cast from off his neck his cloak of scarlet, and sprang to his full height and put away the sword from his shoulders. First he dug a good trench and set up the axes, one long trench for them all, and over it he made straight the line and round about stamped in the earth. And amazement fell on all that beheld how orderly he set the axes, though never before had he seen it so. Then he went and stood by the threshold and began to prove the bow. Thrice he made it to tremble in his great desire to draw it, and thrice he rested from his effort, though still he hoped in his heart to string the bow, and shoot through the iron. And now at last he might have strung it, mightily straining thereat for the fourth time, but Odysseus nodded frowning and stayed him, for all his eagerness. Then the strong prince Telemachus spake among them again:

"Lo you now, even to the end of my days I shall be a coward and a weakling, or it may be I am too young, and have as yet no trust in my hands to defend me from such an one as is angry with me without a cause. But come now, ye who are mightier men than I,

essay the bow and let us make an end of the contest."

Therewith he put the bow from him on the ground, leaning it against the smooth and well-compacted doors, and the swift shaft he propped hard by against the fair bow-tip, and then he sat down once more on the high seat, whence he had risen.

Then Antinoüs, son of Eupeithes, spake among them, saying: "Rise up in order, all my friends, beginning from the left, even from the place whence the wine is poured."

So spake Antinoüs, and the saying pleased them well. Then first stood up Leiodes, son of Œnops, who was their soothsayer and ever sat by the fair mixing bowl at the extremity of the hall; he alone hated their infatuate deeds and was indignant with all the wooers. He now first took the bow and the swift shaft, and he went and stood by the threshold, and began to prove the bow; but he could not bend it; or ever that might be, his hands grew weary with the straining, his unworn, delicate hands; so he spake among the wooers, saying:

"Friends, of a truth I cannot bend it, let some other take it. Ah, many of our bravest shall this bow rob of spirit and of life, since truly it is far better for us to die, than to live on and to fail of that for which we assemble evermore in this place, day by day expecting the prize. Many there be even now that hope in their

hearts and desire to wed Penelope, the bedfellow of Odysseus: but when such an one shall make trial of the bow and see the issue, thereafter let him woo some other fair-robed Achæan woman with his bridal gifts and seek to win her. So may our lady wed the man that gives most gifts, and comes as the chosen of fate."

So he spake, and put from him the bow, leaning it against the smooth and well-compacted doors, and the swift shaft he propped hard by against the fair bow-tip, and then he sat down once more on the high seat, whence he had risen.

But Antinoüs rebuked him, and spake and hailed him: "Leiodes, what word hath escaped the door of thy lips; a hard word, and a grievous? Nay, it angers me to hear it, and to think that a bow such as this shall rob our bravest of spirit and of life, and all because thou canst not draw it. For I tell thee that thy lady mother bare thee not of such might as to draw a bow and shoot arrows: but there be others of the proud wooers that shall draw it soon."

So he spake and commanded Melanthius, the goatherd, saying: "Up now, light a fire in the halls, Melanthius; and place a great settle by the fire and a fleece thereon, and bring forth a great ball of lard that is within, that we young men may warm and anoint the bow therewith and prove it, and make an end of the contest."

So he spake, and Melanthius soon kindled the never-resting fire, and drew up a settle and placed it near, and put a fleece thereon, and he brought forth a great ball of lard that was within. Therewith the young men warmed the bow, and made essay, but could not string it, for they were greatly lacking of such might. But Antinoüs still abode in his place and godlike Eurymachus, chief men among the wooers, who were far the most excellent of all.

Now those other twain had gone forth both together from the house, the neatherd and the swineherd of godlike Odysseus; and Odysseus went forth after them. But they had now passed without the gates and the courtyard, he uttered his voice and spake to them in gentle words:

"Neatherd and thou swineherd, shall I say somewhat or keep it to myself? Nay, my spirit bids me declare it. What manner of men would ye be to help Odysseus, if he should come thus suddenly, I know not whence, and some god were to bring him? Would ye stand on the side of the wooers or of Odysseus? Tell me even as your heart and spirit bid you."

Then the neatherd answered him, saying: "Father Zeus, if but thou wouldest fulfill this wish:—oh, that that man might come, and some god lead him hither! So shouldest thou know what my might is, and how my hands follow to obey."

In like manner Eumæus prayed to all the gods that wise Odysseus might return to his own home.

Now when he knew for a surety what spirit they were of, once more he answered and spake to them, saying:

"Behold, home am I come, even I; after much travail and sore am I come in the twentieth year to mine own country. And I know how that my coming is desired by you alone of all my thralls, for from none besides have I heard a prayer that I might return once more to my home. And now I will tell you all the truth, even as it shall come to pass. If the god shall subdue the proud wooers to my hands, I will bring you each one a wife, and will give you a heritage of your own and a house builded near to me, and ye twain shall be thereafter in mine eyes as the brethren and companions of Telemachus. But behold, I will likewise show you a most manifest token, that ye may know me well and be certified in heart, even the wound that the boar dealt me with his white tusk long ago, when I went to Parnassus with the sons of Autolycus."

Therewith he drew aside the rags from the great scar. And when the twain had beheld it and marked it well, they cast their arms about the wise Odysseus, and fell a-weeping; and kissed him lovingly on head and shoulders. And in like manner Odysseus too kissed their heads and hands. And now would the sunlight

have gone down upon their sorrowing, had not Odysseus himself stayed them, saying:

"Cease ye from weeping and lamentation, lest some one come forth from the hall and see us, and tell it likewise in the house. Nay, go ye within one by one and not both together, I first and you following, and let this be the token between us. All the rest, as many as are proud wooers, will not suffer that I should be given the bow and quiver; do thou then, goodly Eumæus, as thou bearest the bow through the hall, set it in my hands and speak to the women that they bar the well-fitting doors of their chamber. And if any of them hear the sound of groaning or the din of men within our walls, let them not run forth but abide where they are in silence at their work. But on thee, goodly Philœtius, I lay this charge, to bolt and bar the outer gate of the court and swiftly to tie the knot."

Therewith he passed within the fair-lying halls, and went and sat upon the settle whence he had risen. And likewise the two thralls of divine Odysseus went within.

And now Eurymachus was handling the bow, warming it on this side and on that at the light of the fire; yet even so he could not string it, and in his great heart he groaned mightily; and in heaviness of spirit he spake and called aloud, saying:

"Lo you now, truly am I grieved for myself and for

you all! Not for the marriage do I mourn so greatly, afflicted though I be; there are many Achæan women besides, some in sea-begirt Ithaca itself and some in other cities. Nay, but I grieve, if indeed we are so far worse than godlike Odysseus in might, seeing that we cannot bend the bow. It will be a shame even for men unborn to hear thereof."

Then Antinoüs, son of Eupeithes, answered him: "Eurymachus, this shall not be so, and thou thyself too knowest it. For to-day the feast of the archer god is held in the land, a holy feast. Who at such a time would be bending bows? Nay, set it quietly by; what and if we should let the axes all stand as they are? None methinks will come to the hall of Odysseus, son of Laertes, and carry them away. Go to now, let the wine-bearer pour for libation into each cup in turn, that after the drink-offering we may set down the curved bow. And in the morning bid Melanthius, the goatherd, to lead hither the very best goats in all his herds, that we may lay pieces of the thighs on the altar of Apollo the archer, and assay the bow and make an end of the contest."

So spake Antinoüs, and the saying pleased them well. Then the henchman poured water on their hands, and pages crowned the mixing bowls with drink, and served out the wine to all, when they had poured for libation into each cup in turn. But when they had poured forth

and drunken to their hearts' desire, Odysseus of many counsels spake among them out of a crafty heart, saying:

"Hear me, ye wooers of the renowned queen, that I may say that which my heart within me bids. And mainly to Eurymachus I make my prayer and to the godlike Antinoüs, forasmuch as he has spoken even this word aright; namely, that for this present ye cease from your archery and leave the issue to the gods; and in the morning the god will give the victory to whomsoever he will. Come therefore, give me the polished bow, that in your presence I may prove my hands and strength, whether I have yet any force such as once was in my supple limbs, or whether my wanderings and needy fare have even now destroyed it."

So spake he and they all were exceeding wroth, for fear lest he should string the polished bow. And Antinoüs rebuked him, and spake and hailed him:

"Wretched stranger, thou hast no wit, nay, never so little. Art thou not content to feast at ease in our high company, and to lack not thy share of the banquet, but to listen to our speech and our discourse, while no guest and beggar beside thee hears our speech? Wine it is that wounds thee, honeysweet wine, that is the bane of others too, even of all who take great draughts and drink out of measure. Nay then, drink at thine ease, and strive not still with men that are younger than thou."

Then wise Penelope answered him: "Antinoüs, truly it is not fair nor just to rob the guests of Telemachus of their due, whosoever he may be that comes to this house. Dost thou think if yonder stranger strings the great bow of Odysseus, in the pride of his might and of his strength of arm, that he will lead me to his home and make me his wife? Nay, he himself, methinks, has no such hope in his breast; so, as for that, let not any of you fret himself while feasting in this place; that were indeed unmeet."

Then Eurymachus, son of Polybus, answered her, saying: "Daughter of Icarius, wise Penelope, it is not that we deem that he will lead thee to his home,—far be such a thought from us,—but we dread the speech of men and women, lest some day one of the baser sort among the Achæans say: 'Truly, men far too mean are wooing the wife of one that is noble, nor can they string the polished bow. But a stranger and a beggar came in his wanderings, and lightly strung the bow, and shot through the iron.' Thus will they speak, and these things will turn to our reproach."

Then wise Penelope answered him: "Eurymachus, never can there be fair fame in the land for those that devour and dishonour the house of a prince. Why then do ye count such speech as a reproach? But, behold, our guest is great of growth and well-knit, and avows him to be born the son of a good father. Come then,

give ye him the polished bow, that we may see that which is to be. For thus will I declare my saying, and it shall surely come to pass. If he shall string the bow and Apollo grant him renown, I will clothe him in a mantle and a doublet, goodly raiment, and I will give him a sharp javelin to defend him against dogs and men, and a two-edged sword and sandals to bind beneath his feet, and I will send him whithersoever his heart and spirit bid him go."

Then wise Telemachus answered her, saying: "My mother, as for the bow, no Achæan is mightier than I to give or to deny it to whomso I will, neither as many as are lords in rocky Ithaca nor in the isles on the side of Elis, the pastureland of horses. Not one of these shall force me in mine own despite, if I choose to give this bow, yea, once for all, to the stranger to bear away with him. But do thou go to thine own chamber and mind thine own housewiferies, the loom and distaff, and bid thine handmaids ply their tasks. But the bow shall be for men, for all, but for me in chief, for mine is the lordship in the house."

Then in amaze she went back to her chamber, for she laid up the wise saying of her son in her heart. She ascended to her upper chamber with the women her handmaids, and then was bewailing Odysseus, her dear lord, till grey-eyed Athene cast sweet sleep upon her eyelids.

Now the goodly swineherd had taken the curved bow, and was bearing it, when the wooers all cried out upon him in the halls. And thus some one of the haughty youths would speak: "Whither now art thou bearing the curved bow, thou vagabond, thou wretched swineherd? Lo, soon shall the swift hounds of thine own breeding eat thee hard by thy swine, alone and away from men, if Apollo will be gracious to us and the other deathless gods."

Even so they spake, and he took and set down the bow in that very place, being affrighted because many cried out on him in the halls. Then Telemachus from the other side spake threateningly, and called aloud:

"Father, bring hither the bow, soon shalt thou rue it that thou servest many masters. Take heed, lest I that am younger than thou pursue thee to the field, and pelt thee with stones, for in might I am the better. If only I were so much mightier in strength of arm than all the wooers that are in the halls, soon would I send many an one forth on an evil road from out our house, for they imagine mischief against us."

So he spake, and all the wooers laughed sweetly at him, and ceased not from their cruel anger toward Telemachus. Then the swineherd bare the bow through the hall, and went up to wise Odysseus, and set it in his hands. And he called forth the nurse Eurykleia from the chamber and spake to her:

"Wise Eurykleia, Telemachus bids thee bar the well-fitting doors of thy chamber, and if any of the women hear the sound of groaning or the din of men within our walls, let them not go forth, but abide where they are in silence at their work."

So he spake, and the word unwinged abode with her, and she barred the doors of the fair-lying halls.

Then Philœtius hasted forth silently from the house, and barred the outer gates of the fenced court. Now there lay beneath the gallery the cable of a curved ship, fashioned of the byblus plant, wherewith he made fast the gates, and then himself passed within. Then he went and sat on the settle whence he had risen, and gazed upon Odysseus. He already was handling the bow, turning it every way about, and proving it on this side and on that, lest the worms might have eaten the horns when the lord of the bow was away. And thus men spake looking each one to his neighbor:

"Verily he has a good eye, and a shrewd turn for a bow! It must be, methinks, that he himself has the like lying by at home or else he is set on making one, in such wise does he turn it hither and thither in his hands, this evil-witted beggar."

And another again of the haughty youths would say: "Oh, that the fellow may get wherewith to profit withal, just in such measure as he shall ever prevail to bend the bow!"

So spake the wooers, but Odysseus of many counsels had lifted the great bow and viewed it on every side, and even as when a man that is skilled in the lyre and in minstrelsy, easily stretches a cord about a new peg, after tying at either end the twisted sheep-gut, even so Odysseus straightway bent the great bow, all without effort, and took it in his right hand and proved the bowstring, which rang sweetly at the touch, in tone like a swallow. Then great grief came upon the wooers, and the colour of their countenance was changed, and Zeus thundered loud showing forth his tokens. And the steadfast goodly Odysseus was glad thereat, in that the son of deep-counselling Cronos had sent him a sign. Then he caught up a swift arrow which lay by his table, bare, but the other shafts were stored within the hollow quiver, those whereof the Achæans were soon to taste. He took and laid it on the bridge of the bow, and held the notch and drew the string, even from the settle whereon he sat, and with straight aim shot the shaft and missed not one of the axes, beginning from the first axe-handle, and the bronze-weighted shaft passed clean through and out at the last. Then he spake to Telemachus, saying:

"Telemachus, thy guest that sits in the halls does thee no shame. In no wise did I miss my mark, nor was I wearied with long bending of the bow. Still is my might steadfast—not as the wooers say scornfully to

slight me. But now it is time that supper too be got ready for the Achæans, while it is yet light, and thereafter must we make other sport with the dance and the lyre, for these are the crown of the feast."

Therewith he nodded with bent brows, and Telemachus, the dear son of divine Odysseus, girt his sharp sword about him and took the spear in his grasp, and stood by his high seat at his father's side, armed with the gleaming bronze.

BOOK XXII

The killing of the wooers.

Then Odysseus of many counsels stripped him of his rags and leaped on to the great threshold with his bow and quiver full of arrows, and poured forth all the swift shafts there before his feet, and spake among the wooers:

"Lo, now is this terrible trial ended at last; and now will I make for another mark, which never yet man has smitten, if perchance I may strike it and Apollo grant me renown."

With that he pointed the bitter arrow at Antinoüs. Now he was about raising to his lips a fair two-eared chalice of gold, and behold, he was handling it to drink

of the wine, and death was far from his thoughts. For who among men at feast would deem that one man amongst so many, how hardy soever he were, would bring on him foul death and black fate? But Odysseus aimed and smote him with the arrow in the throat, and the point passed clean out through his delicate neck, and he fell back and the cup dropped from his hand as he was smitten, and at once through his nostrils there came up a thick jet of slain man's blood, and quickly he spurned the table from him with his foot, and spilt the food on the ground, and the bread and the roast flesh were defiled. Then the wooers raised a clamour through the halls when they saw the man fallen, and they leaped from their high seats, as men stirred by fear, all through the hall, peering everywhere along the well-builded walls, and nowhere was there a shield or mighty spear to lay hold on. Then they reviled Odysseus with angry words:

"Stranger, thou shootest at men to thy hurt. Never again shalt thou enter other lists, now is utter doom assured thee. Yea, for now hast thou slain the man that was far the best of all the noble youths in Ithaca; wherefore vultures shall devour thee here."

So each one spake, for indeed they thought that Odysseus had not slain him wilfully; but they knew not in their folly that on their own heads, each and all of them, the bands of death had been made fast. Then

Odysseus of many counsels looked fiercely on them, and spake:

"Ye dogs, ye said in your hearts that I should never more come home from the land of the Trojans, in that ye wasted my house, and traitorously wooed my wife while I was yet alive, and ye had no fear of the gods, that hold the wide heaven, nor of the indignation of men hereafter. But now the bands of death have been made fast upon you one and all."

Even so he spake, and pale fear gat hold on the limbs of all, and each man looked about, where he might shun utter doom. And Eurymachus alone answered him, and spake: "If thou art indeed Odysseus of Ithaca, come home again, with right thou speakest thus, of all that the Achæans have wrought, many infatuate deeds in thy halls and many in the field. Howbeit, he now lies dead that is to blame for all, Antinoüs: for he brought all these things upon us, not as longing very greatly for the marriage nor needing it sore, but with another purpose, that Cronion has not fulfilled for him, namely, that he might himself be king over all the land of stablished Ithaca, and he was to have lain in wait for thy son and killed him. But now he is slain after his deserving, and do thou spare thy people, even thine own: and we will hereafter go about the township and yield thee amends for all that has been eaten and drunken in thy halls, each for himself bringing atone-

ment of twenty oxen worth, and requiting thee in gold and bronze till thy heart is softened, but till then none may blame thee that thou art angry."

Then Odysseus of many counsels looked fiercely on him, and said: "Eurymachus, not even if ye gave me all your heritage, all that ye now have, and whatsoever else ye might in any wise add thereto, not even so would I henceforth hold my hands from slaying, ere the wooers had paid for all their transgressions. And now the choice lies before you, whether to fight fair battle or to fly, if any may avoid death and the fates. But there be some methinks, that shall not escape from utter doom."

He spake, and their knees were straightway loosened and their hearts melted within them. And Eurymachus spake among them yet again:

"Friends, it is plain that this man will not hold his unconquerable hands, but now that he has caught up the polished bow and quiver, he will shoot from the smooth threshold, till he has slain us all; wherefore let us take thought for the delight of battle. Draw your blades, and hold up the tables to ward off the arrows of swift death, and let us all have at him with one accord and drive him, if it may be, from the threshold and the doorway and then go through the city, and quickly would the cry be raised. Thereby should this man soon have shot his latest bolt."

Therewith he drew his sharp two-edged sword of bronze, and leapt on Odysseus with a terrible cry, but in the same moment goodly Odysseus shot the arrow forth and struck him on the breast by the pap, and drave the swift shaft into his liver. So he let the sword fall from his hand, and grovelling over the table he bowed and fell, and spilt the food and the two-handled cup on the floor. And in his agony he smote the ground with his brow, and spurning with both his feet he overthrew the high seat, and the mist of death was shed upon his eyes.

Then Amphinomus made at renowned Odysseus, setting straight at him, and drew his sharp sword, if perchance he might make him give ground from the door. But Telemachus was beforehand with him, and cast and smote him from behind with a bronze-shod spear between the shoulders, and drave it out through the breast, and he fell with a crash and struck the ground full with his forehead. Then Telemachus sprang away, leaving the long spear fixed in Amphinomus, for he greatly dreaded lest one of the Achæans might run upon him with his blade, and stab him as he drew forth the spear, or smite him with a down stroke of the sword. So he started and ran and came quickly to his father, and stood by him, and spake winged words:

"Father, lo, now I will bring thee a shield and two

spears and a helmet all of bronze, close fitting on the temples, and when I return I will arm myself, and likewise give arms to the swineherd and to the neatherd yonder: for it is better to be clad in full armour."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying: "Run and bring them while I have arrows to defend me, lest they thrust me from the doorway, one man against them all."

So he spake, and Telemachus obeyed his dear father, and went forth to the chamber, where his famous weapons were lying. Thence he took out four shields and eight spears, and four helmets of bronze, with thick plumes of horse hair, and he started to bring them and came quickly to his father. Now he girded the gear of bronze about his own body first, and in like manner the two thralls did on the goodly armour, and stood beside the wise and crafty Odysseus. Now he, so long as he had arrows to defend him, kept aiming and smote the wooers one by one in his house, and they fell thick one upon another. But when the arrows failed the prince in his archery, he leaned his bow against the doorpost of the stablished hall, against the shining faces of the entrance. As for him he girt his four-fold shield about his shoulders and bound on his mighty head a well-wrought helmet, with horse hair crest, and terribly the plume waved aloft. And he grasped two mighty spears tipped with bronze.

Now there was in the well-builded wall a certain postern raised above the floor, and there, by the topmost level of the threshold of the stablished hall, was a way into an open passage, closed by well-fitted folding doors. So Odysseus bade the goodly swineherd stand near thereto and watch the way, for thither was there but one approach. Then Agelaus spake among them, and declared his word to all:

"Friends, will not some man climb up to the postern, and give word to the people, and a cry would be raised straightway; so should this man soon have shot his latest bolt?"

Then Melanthius, the goatherd, answered him, saying: "It may in no wise be, prince Agelaus; for the fair doors toward the court are grievously near to the postern, and perilous is the entrance to the passage, and one mighty man would keep back a host. But come, let me bring you armour from the inner chamber, that ye may be clad in hauberks, for methinks it is in that room and no other, that Odysseus and his renowned son laid by the arms."

Therewith Melanthius, the goatherd, climbed up by the clerestory of the hall to the inner chambers of Odysseus, whence he took twelve shields and as many spears, and as many helmets of bronze with thick plumes of horse hair, and he came forth and brought them speedily, and gave them to the wooers. Then the knees of

Odysseus were loosened and his heart melted within him, when he saw them girding on the armour and brandishing the long spears in their hands, and great, he saw was the adventure. Quickly he spake to Telemachus winged words:

"Telemachus, sure I am that one of the women in the halls is stirring up an evil battle against us, or perchance it is Melanthius."

Then wise Telemachus answered him: "My father, it is I that have erred herein and none other is to blame, for I left the well-fitted door of the chamber open, and there has been one of them but too quick to spy it. Go now, goodly Eumæus, and close the door of the chamber, and mark if it be indeed one of the women that does this mischief, or Melanthius, as methinks it is."

Even so they spake one to the other. And Melanthius, the goatherd, went yet again to the chamber to bring the fair armour. But the goodly swineherd was ware thereof, and quickly he spake to Odysseus who stood nigh him:

"Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus, of many devices, lo, there again is that baleful man, whom we ourselves suspect, going to the chamber; do thou tell me truly, shall I slay him if I prove the better man, or bring him hither to thee, that he may pay for the many transgressions that he has devised in thy house?"

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered, saying: "Verily, I and Telemachus will keep the proud wooers within the halls, for all their fury, but do ye twain tie his feet and arms behind his back and cast him into the chamber, and close the doors after you, and make fast to his body a twisted rope, and drag him up the lofty pillar till he be near the roof beams, that he may hang there and live for long, and suffer grievous torment."

So he spake, and they gave good heed and hearkened. So they went forth to the chamber, but the goatherd who was within knew not of their coming. Now he was seeking for the armour in the secret place of the chamber, but they twain stood in waiting on either side the doorposts. And when Melanthius, the goatherd, was crossing the threshold with a goodly helm in one hand, and in the other a wide shield and an old, stained with rust, the shield of the hero Laertes that he bare when he was young,—but at that time it was laid by, and the seams of the straps were loosened,—then the twain rushed on him and caught him, and dragged him in by the hair, and cast him on the floor in sorrowful plight, and bound him hand and foot in a bitter bond, tightly winding each limb behind his back, even as the son of Laertes bade them, the steadfast goodly Odysseus. And they made fast to his body a twisted rope, and dragged him up the lofty pillar till he came

near the roof beams. Then didst thou speak to him and gird at him, swineherd Eumæus:

"Now in good truth, Melanthius, shalt thou watch all night, lying in a soft bed as beseems thee, nor shall the early-born Dawn escape thy ken, when she comes forth from the streams of Oceanus, on her golden throne, in the hour when thou art wont to drive the goats to make a meal for the wooers in the halls."

So he was left there, stretched tight in the deadly bond. But they twain got into their harness, and closed the shining door, and went to Odysseus, wise and crafty chief. There they stood breathing fury, four men by the threshold, while those others within the halls were many and good warriors. Then Athene, daughter of Zeus, drew nigh them, like Mentor in fashion and in voice, and Odysseus was glad when he saw her and spake, saying:

"Mentor, ward from us hurt, and remember me, thy dear companion, that befriended thee often, and thou art of like age with me."

So he spake, deeming the while that it was Athene, summoner of the host. But the wooers on the other side shouted in the halls, and first Agelaus, son of Damastor, rebuked Athene, saying:

"Mentor, let not the speech of Odysseus beguile thee to fight against the wooers, and to succour him. For methinks that on this wise we shall work our will. When

we shall have slain these men, father and son, thereafter shalt thou perish with them, such deeds thou art set on doing in these halls: nay, with thine own head shalt thou pay the price. But when with the sword we shall have overcome your violence, we will mingle all thy possessions, all that thou hast at home or in the field, with the wealth of Odysseus, and we will not suffer thy sons nor thy daughters to dwell in the halls, nor thy good wife to gad about in the town of Ithaca."

So spake he, and Athene waxed yet more wroth at heart, and chid Odysseus with angry words: "Odysseus, thou hast no more steadfast might nor any prowess, as when for nine whole years continually thou didst battle with the Trojans for high-born Helen, of the white arms, and many men thou slewest in terrible warfare, and by thy device the wide-wayed city of Priam was taken. How then, now that thou art come to thy house and thine own possessions, dost thou bewail the need of courage to stand before the wooers? Nay, come hither, friend, and stand by me, and I will show thee a thing, that thou mayest know what manner of man is Mentor, son of Alcimus, to repay good deeds in the ranks of foemen."

She spake, and gave him not yet clear victory in full, but still for a while made trial of the might and prowess of Odysseus and his renowned son. As for her she

flew up to the roof timber of the murky hall, in such fashion as a swallow flies, and there sat down.

Now Agelaus, son of Damastor, urged on the wooers, and likewise Eurynomus and Amphimedon and Demoptolemus and Peisandrus son of Polyctor, and wise Polybus, for these were in valiancy far the best men of the wooers, that still lived and fought for their lives: for the rest had fallen already beneath the bow and the thick rain of arrows. Then Agelaus spake among them, and made known his word to all:

"Friends, now at last will this man hold his unconquerable hands. Lo, now has Mentor left him and spoken but vain boasts, and these remain alone at the entrance of the doors. Wherefore now, throw not your long spears all together, but come, do ye six cast first, if perchance Zeus may grant us to smite Odysseus and win renown. Of the rest will we take no heed, so soon as that man shall have fallen."

So he spake and they all cast their javelins, as he bade them, eagerly; but behold, Athene so wrought that they were all in vain. One man smote the doorpost of the stablished hall, and another the well-fastened door, and the ashen spear of yet another wooer, heavy with bronze, stuck fast in the wall. So when they had avoided all the spears of the wooers, the steadfast goodly Odysseus began first to speak among them.

"Friends, now my word is that we too cast and hurl

into the press of the wooers, that are mad to slay and strip us beyond the measure of their former iniquities."

So he spake, and they all took good aim and threw their sharp spears, and Odysseus smote Demoptolemus, and Telemachus Euryades, and the swineherd slew Elatus, and the neatherd Peisandrus. Thus they all bit the wide floor with their teeth, and the wooers fell back into the inmost part of the hall. But the others dashed upon them, and drew forth the shafts from the bodies of the dead.

Then once more the wooers threw their sharp spears eagerly; but behold, Athene so wrought that many of them were in vain. One man smote the doorpost of the stablished hall, and another the well-fastened door, and the ashen spear of another wooer, heavy with bronze, struck in the wall. Yet Amphimedon hit Telemachus on the hand by the wrist lightly, and the shaft of bronze wounded the surface of the skin. And Ctesippus grazed the shoulder of Eumæus with a long spear high above the shield, and the spear flew over and fell to the ground. Then again Odysseus, the wise and crafty, he and his men cast their swift spears into the press of the wooers, and now once more Odysseus, waster of cities, smote Eurydamas, and Telemachus Amphimedon, and the swineherd slew Polybus, and last, the neatherd struck Ctesippus in the breast and boasted over him, saying:

"O son of Poyltherses, thou lover of jeering, never give place at all to folly to speak so big, but leave thy case to the gods, since in truth they are far mightier than thou. This gift is thy recompense for the ox-foot that thou gavest of late to the divine Odysseus, when he went begging through the house."

So spake the keeper of the shambling kine. Next Odysseus wounded the son of Damastor in close fight with his long spear, and Telemachus wounded Leocritus son of Euenor, right in the flank with his lance, and drave the bronze point clean through, that he fell prone and struck the ground full with his forehead. Then Athene held up her destroying ægis on high from the roof, and their minds were scared, and they fled through the hall, like a drove of kine that the flitting gadfly falls upon and scatters hither and thither in springtime, when the long days begin. But the others set on like vultures of crooked claws and curved beak, that come forth from the mountains and dash upon smaller birds, and these scour low in the plain, stooping in terror from the clouds, while the vultures pounce on them and slay them, and there is no help nor way of flight, and men are glad at the sport: even so did the company of Odysseus set upon the wooers and smite them right and left through the hall: and there rose a hideous moaning as their heads were smitten, and the floor all ran with blood.

Now Leiodes took hold of the knees of Odysseus eagerly, and besought him and spake winged words: "I entreat thee by thy knees, Odysseus, and do thou show mercy on me and have pity. For never yet, I say, have I wronged a maiden in thy halls by froward word or deed, nay, I bade the other wooers refrain, whoso of them wrought thus. But they hearkened not unto me to keep their hands from evil. Wherefore they have met a shameful death through their own infatuate deeds. Yet I, the soothsayer among them, that have wrought no evil, shall fall even as they, for no gratitude survives for good deeds done."

Then Odysseus of many counsels looked askance at him, and said; "If indeed thou dost avow thee to be the soothsayer of these men, thou art like to have often prayed in the halls that the issue of a glad return might be far from me, and that my dear wife should follow thee and bear thee children: wherefore thou shalt not escape the bitterness of death."

Therewith he caught up a sword in his strong hand, that lay where Agelaus had let it fall to the ground when he was slain, and drave it clean through his neck, and as he yet spake his head fell even to the dust.

But the son of Terpes, the minstrel, still sought how he might shun black fate, Phemius, who sang among the wooers of necessity. He stood with the loud lyre in his hand hard by the postern gate, and his heart was

divided within him, whether he should slip forth from the hall and sit down by the well-wrought altar of great Zeus of the household court, whereon Laertes and Odysseus had burnt many pieces of the thighs of oxen, or should spring forward and beseech Odysseus by his knees. And as he thought thereupon this seemed to him the better way, to embrace the knees of Odysseus, son of Laertes. So he laid the hollow lyre on the ground between the mixing bowl and the high seat inlaid with silver, and himself sprang forward and seized Odysseus by the knees, and besought him and spake winged words:

"I entreat thee by thy knees, Odysseus, and do thou show mercy on me and have pity. It will be a sorrow to thyself in the after time if thou slayest me who am a minstrel, and sing before gods and men. Yea, none has taught me but myself, and the god has put into my heart all manner of lays, and methinks I sing to thee as to a god, wherefore be not eager to cut off my head. And Telemachus will testify of this, thine own dear son, that not by mine own will or desire did I resort to thy house to sing to the wooers after their feasts; but being so many stronger than I they led me by constraint."

So he spake, and the mighty prince Telemachus heard him and quickly spake to his father at his side: 'Hold thy hand, and wound not this blameless man

with the sword: and let us save also the henchman Medon, that ever had charge of me in our house when I was a child, unless perchance Philœtius or the swineherd have already slain him, or he hath met thee in thy raging through the house."

So he spake, and Medon, wise of heart, heard him. For he lay crouching beneath a high seat, clad about in the new-flayed hide of an ox and shunned black fate. So he rose up quickly from under the seat, and cast off the ox-hide, and sprung forth and caught Telemachus by the knees, and besought him and spake winged words:

"Friend, here am I; prithee stay thy hand and speak to thy father, lest he harm me with the sharp sword in the greatness of his strength, out of his anger for the wooers that wasted his possessions in the halls, and in their folly held thee in no honour."

And Odysseus of many counsels smiled on him and said: "Take courage, for lo, he has saved thee and delivered thee, that thou mayst know in thy heart, and tell it even to another, how far more excellent are good deeds than evil. But go forth from the halls and sit down in the court apart from the slaughter, thou and the full-voiced minstrel, till I have accomplished all that I must needs do in the house."

Therewith the two went forth and gat them from the hall. So they sat down by the altar of great Zeus,

peering about on every side, still expecting death. And Odysseus peered all through the house, to see if any man was yet alive and hiding away to shun black fate. But he found all the sort of them fallen in their blood in the dust, like fishes that the fisherman have drawn forth in the meshes of the net into a hollow of the beach from out the grey sea, and all the fish, sore longing for the salt sea waves, are heaped upon the sand, and the sun shines forth and takes their life away; so now the wooers lay heaped upon each other. Then Odysseus of many counsels spake to Telemachus:

"Telemachus, go, call me the nurse Eurykleia, that I may tell her a word that is on my mind."

So he spake, and Telemachus obeyed his dear father, and smote at the door, and spake to the nurse Eurykleia: "Up now, aged wife, that overlookest all the women servants in our halls, come hither, my father calls thee and has somewhat to say to thee."

Even so he spake, and his word unwinged abode with her, and she opened the doors of the fair-lying halls, and came forth, and Telemachus led the way before her. So she found Odysseus among the bodies of the dead, stained with blood and soil of battle, like a lion that has eaten of an ox of the homestead and goes on his way, and all his breast and his cheeks on either side are flecked with blood, and he is terrible to behold; even so was Odysseus stained, both hands

and feet. And the nurse, when she saw the bodies of the dead and the great gore of blood, made ready to cry aloud for joy, beholding so great an adventure. But Odysseus checked and held her in her eagerness, and uttering his voice spake to her winged words:

"Within thine own heart rejoice, old nurse, and be still, and cry not aloud; for it is an unholy thing to boast over slain men. Now these hath the destiny of the gods overcome, and their own cruel deeds, for they honoured none of earthly men, neither the good nor yet the bad, that came among them. Wherefore they have met a shameful death through their own infatuate deeds. But come, tell me the tale of the women in my halls, which of them dishonour me, and which be guiltless."

Then the good nurse Eurykleia answered him: "Yea now, my child, I will tell thee all the truth. Thou hast fifty women-servants in thy halls, that we have taught the ways of housewifery, how to card wool and to bear bondage. Of these twelve in all have gone the way of shame, and honour not me, nor their lady Penelope. And Telemachus hath but newly come to his strength, and his mother suffered him not to take command over the women in this house. But now, let me go aloft to the shining upper chamber, and tell all to thy wife, on whom some god hath sent a sleep."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her, saying: "Wake her not yet, but bid the women come hither, who in time past behaved themselves unseemly."

So he spake, and the old wife passed through the hall, to tell the women and to hasten their coming. Then Odysseus called to him Telemachus, and the neatherd, and the swineherd, and spake to them winged words:

"Begin ye now to carry out the dead, and bid the women help you, and thereafter cleanse the fair high seats and the tables with water and porous sponges. And when ye have set all the house in order, lead the maidens without the stablished hall, between the vaulted room and the goodly fence of the court, and there slay them with your long blades, till they shall have all given up the ghost and forgotten the love that of old they had at the bidding of the wooers."

Even so he spake, and the women came all in a crowd together, making a terrible lament and shedding big tears. So first they carried forth the bodies of the slain, and set them beneath the gallery of the fenced court, and propped them one on another; and Odysseus himself hasted the women and directed them, and they carried forth the dead perforce. Thereafter they cleansed the fair high seats and the tables with water and porous sponges. And Telemachus, and the neatherd, and the swineherd scraped with spades the floor

of the well-builded house, and, behold, the maidens carried all forth and laid it without the doors.

Now when they had made an end of setting the hall in order, they led the maidens forth from the stablished hall, and drove them up in a narrow space between the vaulted room and the goodly fence of the court, whence none might avoid; and wise Telemachus began to speak to his fellows, saying:

"God forbid that I should take these women's lives by a clean death, these that have poured dishonour on my head and on my mother."

With that word he tied the cable of a dark-prowed ship to a great pillar and flung it round the vaulted room, and fastened it aloft, that none might touch the ground with her feet. And even as when thrushes, long of wing, or doves fall into a net that is set in a thicket, as they seek their roosting-place, and a hateful bed harbours them, even so the women held their heads all in a row, and about all their necks nooses were cast, that they might die by the most pitiful death. And they writhed with their feet for a little space, but for no long while.

Then they led out Melanthius through the gateway and the court, and cut off his nostrils and his ears with the pitiless sword, and drew forth his vitals for the dogs to devour raw, and cut off his hands and feet in their cruel anger.

Thereafter they washed their hands and feet, and went into the house to Odysseus, and all the adventure was over. So Odysseus called to the good nurse Eurykleia: "Bring sulphur, old nurse, that cleanses all pollution and bring me fire, that I may purify the house with sulphur, and do thou bid Penelope come here with her handmaidens, and tell all the women in the house to speed them hither."

Then the good nurse Eurykleia made answer: "Yea, my child, herein thou hast spoken aright. But go to, let me bring thee a mantle and a doublet for raiment, and stand not thus in the halls with thy broad shoulders wrapped in rags; it were blame in thee so to do."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her, saying: "First let a fire now be made me in the hall."

So he spake, and the good nurse Eurykleia was not slow to obey, but brought fire and brimstone: and Odysseus thoroughly purged the women's chamber and the great hall and the court.

Then the old wife went through the fair halls of Odysseus to tell the women, and to hasten their coming. So they came forth from their chamber with torches in their hands, and fell about Odysseus, and embraced him and kissed and clasped his head and shoulders and his hands lovingly, and a sweet longing came on him to weep and moan, for he remembered them every one.

BOOK XXIII

Odysseus maketh himself known to Penelope, tells his adventures briefly, and in the morning goes to Laertes and makes himself known to him.

Then the ancient woman went up in the upper chamber laughing aloud, to tell her mistress how her dear lord was within, and her knees moved fast for joy, and her feet stumbled one over the other; and she stood above the lady's head and spake to her, saying:

"Awake, Penelope, dear child, that thou mayest see with thine own eyes that which thou desirest day by day. Odysseus hath come, and hath got him to his own house, though late hath he come, and hath slain the proud wooers that troubled his house, and devoured his substance, and oppressed his child."

Then wise Penelope answered her: "Dear nurse, the gods have made thee distraught, the gods that can make foolish even the wisdom of the wise, and that stablish the simple in understanding. They it is that have marred thy reason, though heretofore thou hadst a prudent heart. Why dost thou mock me, who have a spirit full of sorrow, to speak these wild words, and rousest me out of sweet slumber, that had bound me and overshadowed mine eyelids? Never yet have I slept so sound since the day that Odysseus went forth to see that evil Ilios, never to be named. Go to now, get thee down and back to the women's chamber,

for if any other of the maids of my house had come and brought me such tidings, and wakened me from sleep, straightway would I have sent her back woefully to return within the women's chamber; but this time thine old age shall stand thee in good stead."

Then the good nurse Eurykleia answered her: "I mock thee not, dear child, but in very deed Odysseus is here, and hath come home, even as I tell thee. He is that guest on whom all men wrought such dishonour in the halls. But long ago Telemachus was ware of him, that he was within the house, yet in his prudence he hid the counsels of his father, that he might take vengeance on the violence of the haughty wooers."

Thus she spake, and then was Penelope glad, and leaping from her bed she fell on the old woman's neck, and let fall the tears from her eyelids, and uttering her voice spake to her winged words: "Come, dear nurse, I pray thee, tell me all the truth, if indeed he hath come home as thou sayest, how he hath laid his hands on the shameless wooers, he being but one man, while they abode ever in their companies within the house."

Then the nurse Eurykleia answered her: "I saw not, I wist not, only I heard the groaning of men slain. And we in an inmost place of the well-builded chambers sat all amazed, and the close-fitted doors shut in

the room, till thy son called me from the chamber, for his father sent him out to that end. Then I found Odysseus standing among the slain, who around him, stretched on the hard floor, lay one upon the other; it would have comforted thy heart to see him, all stained like a lion with blood and soil of battle. And now are all the wooers gathered in a heap by the gates of the court, while he is purifying his fair house with brimstone, and hath kindled a great fire, and hath sent me forth to call thee. So come with me, that ye may both enter into your hearts' delight, for ye have suffered much affliction. And even now hath this thy long desire been fulfilled; thy lord hath come alive to his own hearth, and hath found both thee and his son in the halls; and the wooers that wrought him evil he hath slain, every man of them in his house."

Then wise Penelope answered her: "Dear nurse, boast not yet over them with laughter. Thou knowest how welcome the sight of him would be in the halls to all, and to me in chief, and to his son that we got between us. But this is no true tale, as thou declarest it, nay, but it is one of the deathless gods that hath slain the proud wooers, in wrath at their bitter insolence and evil deeds. For they honoured none of earthly men, neither the good nor yet the bad, that came among them. Wherefore they have suffered an evil doom through their own infatuate deeds. But Odys-

seus, far away, hath lost his homeward path to the Achæan land, and himself is lost."

Then the good nurse Eurykleia made answer to her: "My child, what word hath escaped the door of thy lips, in that thou saidest that thy lord, who is even now within, and by his own hearth-stone, would return no more? Nay, thy heart is ever hard of belief. Go to now, and I will tell thee besides a most manifest token, even the scar of the wound that the boar on a time dealt with his white tusk. This I spied while washing his feet, and fain I would have told it even to thee, but he laid his hand on my mouth, and in the fulness of his wisdom suffered me not to speak. But come with me and I will stake my life on it; and, if I play thee false, do thou slay me by a death most pitiful."

Then wise Penelope made answer to her: "Dear nurse, it is hard for thee, how wise soever, to spy out the purposes of the everlasting gods. None the less let us go to my child, that I may see the wooers dead, and him that slew them."

With that word she went down from the upper chamber, and much her heart debated, whether she should stand apart, and question her dear lord or draw nigh, and clasp and kiss his head and hands. But when she had come within and had crossed the threshold of stone, she sat down over against Odysseus, in the light

of the fire, by the further wall. Now he was sitting by the tall pillar, looking down and waiting to know if perchance his noble wife would speak to him, when her eyes beheld him. But she sat long in silence, and amazement came upon her soul, and now she would look upon him steadfastly with her eyes, and now again she knew him not, for that he was clad in vile raiment. And Telemachus rebuked her, and spake and hailed:

"Mother mine, ill mother, of an ungentle heart, why turnest thou thus away from my father, and dost not sit by him and question him and ask him all? No other woman in the world would harden her heart to stand thus aloof from her lord, who after much travail and sore had come to her in the twentieth year to his own country. But thy heart is ever harder than stone."

Then wise Penelope answered him, saying: "Child, my mind is amazed within me, and I have no strength to speak, nor to ask him aught, nay, nor to look on him face to face. But if in truth this be Odysseus, and he hath indeed come home, verily we shall be ware of each other the more surely, for we have tokens that we twain know, even we, secret from all others."

So she spake, and the steadfast goodly Odysseus smiled, and quickly he spake to Telemachus winged words: "Telemachus, leave now thy mother to make trial of me within the chambers; so shall she soon come to a better knowledge than heretofore. But now I go

filthy, and am clad in vile raiment, wherefore she has me in dishonour, and as yet will not allow that I am he. Let us then advise us how all may be for the very best. For whoso has slain but one man in a land, even one that leaves not many behind him to take up the feud for him, turns outlaw and leaves his kindred and his own country; but we have slain the very stay of the city, the men who were far the best of all the noble youths in Ithaca. So this I bid thee consider."

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: "Father, see thou to this, for they say that thy counsel is far the best among men, nor might any other of mortal men contend with thee. But right eagerly will we go with thee now, and I think we shall not lack prowess, so far as might is ours."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying: "Yea now, I will tell on what wise methinks it is best. First, go ye to the bath and array you in your doublets, and bid the maidens in the chambers to take to them their garments. Then let the divine minstrel, with his loud lyre in hand, lead off for us the measure of the mirthful dance. So shall any man that hears the sound from without, whether a wayfarer or one of those that dwell around, say that it is a wedding feast. And thus the slaughter of the wooers shall not be noised abroad through the town before we go forth to our well-wooded farm land. Thereafter shall we consider

what gainful counsel the Olympian may vouchsafe us.

So he spake, and they gave good ear and hearkened to him. So first they went to the bath, and arrayed them in doublets, and the women were apparelled, and the divine minstrel took the hollow harp, and aroused in them the desire of sweet song and of the happy dance. Then the great hall rang round them with a sound of the feet of dancing men and of fair-girdled women. And whoso heard it from without would say:

"Surely some one has wedded the queen of many wooers. Hard of heart was she, nor had she courage to keep the great house of her wedded lord continually till his coming."

Even so men spake, and knew not how these things were ordained. Meanwhile, the house-dame Eurynome had bathed the great-hearted Odysseus within his house, and anointed him with olive-oil, and cast about him a goodly mantle and a doublet. Moreover, Athene shed great beauty from his head downwards, and made him greater and more mighty to behold, and from his head caused deep curling locks to flow, like the hyacinth flower. And as when some skilful man overlays gold upon silver, one that Hephæstus and Pallas Athene have taught all manner of craft, and full of grace is his handiwork, even so did Athene shed grace about his head and shoulders, and forth from the bath he came, in form like to the Immortals.

Then he sat down again on the high seat, whence he had arisen, over against his wife, and spake to her saying:

"Strange lady, surely to thee above all womankind the Olympians have given a heart that cannot be softened. No other woman in the world would harden her heart to stand thus aloof from her husband, who after much travail and sore had come to her, in the twentieth year, to his own country. Nay come, nurse, strew a bed for me to lie all alone, for assuredly her spirit within her is as iron."

Then wise Penelope answered him again: "Strange man, I have no proud thoughts nor do I think scorn of thee, nor am I too greatly astonished, but I know right well what manner of man thou wert, when thou wentest forth out of Ithaca, on the long-oared galley. But come, Eurykleia, spread for him the good bedstead outside the stablished bridal chamber that he built himself. Thither bring ye forth the good bedstead and cast bedding thereon, even fleeces and rugs and shining blankets."

So she spoke and made trial of her lord, but Odysseus in sore displeasure spake to his true wife, saying: "Verily a bitter word is this, lady, that thou hast spoken. Who has set my bed otherwise? Hard it would be for one, how skilled soever, unless a god were to come that might easily set it in another place,

if so he would. But of men there is none living, howsoever strong in his youth, that could lightly upheave it, for a great marvel is wrought in the fashion of the bed, and it was I that made it and none other. There was growing a bush of olive, long of leaf, and most goodly of growth, within the inner court, and the stem as large as a pillar. Round about this I built the chamber, till I had finished it, with stones close set, and I roofed it over well and added thereto compacted doors fitting well. Next I sheared off the light wood of the long-cleaved olive, and rough-hewed the trunk upwards from the root, and smoothed it around with the adze, well and skilfully, and made straight the line thereto and so fashioned it into the bedpost, and I bored it all with the auger. Beginning from this bedpost, I wrought at the bedstead till I had finished it and made it fair with inlaid work of gold and of silver and of ivory. Then I made fast therein a bright purple band of ox-hide. Even so I declare to thee this token, and I know not, lady, if the bedstead be yet fast in its place, or if some man has cut away the stem of the olive tree, and set the bedstead otherwhere."

So he spake, and at once her knees were loosened, and her heart melted within her, as she knew the sure tokens that Odysseus showed her. Then she fell aweeping, and ran straight toward him and cast her

hands about his neck, and kissed his head and spake, saying:

"Murmur not against me, Odysseus, for thou wert ever at other times the wisest of men. It is the gods that gave us sorrow, the gods who were jealous that we should abide together and have joy of our youth, and come to the threshold of old age. So now be not wroth with me hereat nor full of indignation, because I did not welcome thee gladly as now, when first I saw thee. For always my heart within my breast shuddered, for fear lest some man should come and deceive me with his words, for many they be that devise gainful schemes and evil. Nay, even Argive Helen, daughter of Zeus, would not have taken a stranger for a lover, had she known that the warlike sons of the Achæans would bring her home again to her own dear country. Howsoever, it was the god that set her upon this shameful deed; nor ever, ere that, did she lay in her heart the thought of this folly, a bitter folly, whence on us too first came sorrow. But now that thou hast told all the sure tokens of our bed, which never was seen by mortal man, save by thee and me and one maiden only, the daughter of Actor, that my father gave me ere yet I had come hither, she who kept the doors of our strong bridal chamber, even now dost thou bend my soul, all ungentle as it is."

Thus she spake, and in his heart she stirred yet a greater longing to lament, and he wept as he embraced his beloved wife and true. And even as when the sight of land is welcome to swimmers, whose well-wrought ship Poseidon hath smitten on the deep, all driven with the wind and swelling waves, and but a remnant hath escaped the grey sea-water and swum to the shore, and their bodies are all crusted with the brine, and gladly have they set foot on land and escaped an evil end; so welcome to her was the sight of her lord, and her white arms she would never quite let go from his neck. And now would the rosy-fingered Dawn have risen upon their weeping, but the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, had other thoughts. The night she held long in the utmost West, and on the other side she stayed the golden-throned Dawn by the stream Oceanus, and suffered her not to harness the swift-footed steeds that bear light to men, Lampus and Phaëthon, the steeds ever young, that bring the morning.

Then at the last, Odysseus of many counsels spake to his wife, saying: "Lady, we have not yet come to the issue of all our labours; but still there will be toil unmeasured, long and difficult, that I must needs bring to a full end. Even so the spirit of Teiresias foretold to me, on that day when I went down into the house of Hades, to inquire after a returning for myself and my company. Wherefore come, lady, let us to bed,

that forthwith we may take our joy of rest beneath the spell of sweet sleep."

Then wise Penelope answered him: "Thy bed verily shall be ready whensoever thy soul desires it, forasmuch as the gods have indeed caused thee to come back to thy stablished home and thine own country. But now that thou hast noted it and the god has put it into thy heart, come, tell me of this ordeal, for methinks the day will come when I must learn it, and timely knowledge is no hurt."

And Odysseus of many counsels answered her, saying: "Ah, why now art thou so instant with me to declare it? Yet I will tell thee all and hide nought. Howbeit thy heart shall have no joy of it, as even I myself have no pleasure therein. For Teiresias bade me fare to many cities of men, carrying a shapen oar in my hands, till I should come to such men as know not the sea, neither eat meat savoured with salt, nor have they knowledge of ships of purple cheek nor of shapen oars, which serve for wings to ships. And he told me this manifest token, which I will not hide from thee. In the day when another wayfarer should meet me and say that I had a winnowing fan on my stout shoulder, even then he bade me make fast my shapen oar in the earth, and do goodly sacrifice to the lord Poseidon, even with a ram and a bull and a boar, the mate of swine, and depart for home, and offer holy hecatombs to the deathless gods, that

keep the wide heaven, to each in order due. And from the sea shall mine own death come, the gentlest death that may be, which shall end me, fordone with smooth old age, and the folk shall dwell happily around. All this, he said, was to be fulfilled."

Then wise Penelope answered him, saying: "If indeed the gods will bring about for thee a happier old age at the last, then is there hope that thou mayest yet have an escape from evil."

Thus they spake one to the other. Meanwhile, Eurynome and the nurse spread the bed with soft coverlets, by the light of the torches burning. But when they had busied them and spread the good bed, the ancient nurse went back to her chamber to lie down, and Eurynome, the bower-maiden, guided them on their way to the couch, with torches in her hands, and when she had led them to the bridal chamber she departed. But Telemachus, and the neatherd, and the swineherd stayed their feet from dancing, and made the women to cease, and themselves gat them to rest through the shadowy halls.

Then the goddess, grey-eyed Athene, turned to new thoughts. When she conceived that Odysseus had taken his fill of sleep, straightway she aroused from out Oceanus the golden-throned Dawn, to bear light to men. Then Odysseus gat him up from his soft bed, and laid this charge on his wife, saying:

"Lady, already have we had enough of labours, thou and I; thou, in weeping here, and longing for my troublous return, I, while Zeus and the other gods bound me fast in pain, despite my yearning after home, away from mine own country. But now that we both have come to our desire, take thou thought for the care of my wealth within the halls. But as for the sheep that the proud wooers have slain, I myself will lift many more as spoil, and others the Achæans will give, till they fill all my folds. But now, behold, I go to the well-wooded farm land, to see my good father, who for love of me has been in sorrow continually. And this charge I lay on thee, lady, too wise though thou art to need it. Quickly will the bruit go forth with the rising sun, the bruit concerning the wooers, whom I slew in the halls. Wherefore ascend with the women thy handmaids into the upper chamber, and sit there and look on no man, nor ask any question."

Therewith he girded on his shoulder his goodly armour, and roused Telemachus and the neatherd and the swineherd, and bade them all take weapons of war in their hands. So they were not disobedient to his word, but clad themselves in mail, and opened the doors and went forth, and Odysseus led the way. And now there was light over all the earth; but them Athene hid in night, and quickly conducted out of the town.

BOOK XXIV

The Ithacans bury the wooers, and sitting in council resolve on revenge. And coming near the house of Laertes, they are met by Odysseus and Laertes with Telemachus and servants, the whole number twelve, and are overcome, and submit.

Now when they had gone down from the city, quickly they came to the rich and well-ordered farm land of Laertes, that he had won for himself of old, as the prize of great toil in war. There was his house, and all about it ran the huts wherein the thralls were wont to eat and dwell and sleep, bondsmen that worked his will. And in the house there was an old Sicilian woman, who diligently cared for the old man, in the upland far from the city. There Odysseus spake to his thralls and to his son, saying:

"Do ye now get you within the well-builded house, and quickly sacrifice the best of the swine for the mid-day meal but I will make trial of my father, whether he will know me again and be aware of me when he sees me, or know me not, so long have I been away."

Therewith he gave the thralls his weapons of war. Then they went speedily to the house, while Odysseus drew near to the fruitful vineyard to make trial of his father. Now he found not Dolius there, as he went down into the great garden, nor any of the

thralls nor of their sons. It chanced that they had all gone to gather stones for a garden fence, and the old man at their head. So he found his father alone in the terraced vineyard, digging about a plant. He was clothed in a filthy doublet, patched an unseemly, with clouted leggings of ox-hide bound about his legs, against the scratches of the thorns, and long sleeves over his hands by reason of the brambles, and on his head he wore a goatskin cap, and so he nursed his sorrow. Now when the steadfast goodly Odysseus saw his father thus wasted with age and in great grief of heart, he stood still beneath a tall pear tree and let fall a tear. Then he communed with his heart and soul, whether he should fall on his father's neck and kiss him, and tell him all, how he had returned and come to his own country, or whether he should first question him and prove him in every word. And as he thought within himself, this seemed to him the better way, namely, first to prove his father and speak to him sharply. So with this intent the goodly Odysseus went up to him. Now he was holding his head down and kept digging about the plant, while his renowned son stood by him and spake, saying:

"Old man, thou hast no lack of skill in tending a garden; lo, thou carest well for all, nor is there aught whatsoever, either plant or fig tree, or vine, yea, or olive, or pear, or garden-bed in all the close, that

is not well seen to. Yet another thing will I tell thee and lay not up wrath thereat in thy heart. Thyself art scarce so well cared for, but a pitiful old age is on thee, and withal thou art withered and unkempt, and clad unseemly. It cannot be to punish thy sloth that thy master cares not for thee; there shows nothing of the slave about thy face and stature, for thou art like a kingly man, even like one who should lie soft, when he has washed and eaten well, as is the manner of the aged. But come, declare me this and plainly tell it all. Whose thrall art thou, and whose garden dost thou tend? Tell me moreover truly, that I may surely know, if it be indeed to Ithaca that I am now come, as one yonder told me who met with me but now on the way hither. He was but of little understanding, for he deigned not to tell me all nor to heed my saying, when I questioned him concerning my friend, whether indeed he is yet alive or is even now dead and within the house of Hades. For I will declare it and do thou mark and listen: Once did I kindly entreat a man in mine own dear country, who came to our home, and never yet has any mortal been dearer of all the strangers that have drawn to my house from afar. He declared him to be by lineage from out of Ithaca, and said that his own father was Laertes son of Arceisius. So I led him to our halls and gave him good entertainment, with all

loving-kindness, out of the plenty that was within. Such gifts too I gave him as are the due of guests; of well-wrought gold I gave him seven talents, and a mixing bowl of flowered work, all of silver, and twelve cloaks of single fold, and as many coverlets, and as many goodly mantles and doublets to boot, and besides all these, four women skilled in all fair works and most comely, the women of his choice."

Then his father answered him, weeping: "Stranger, thou art verily come to that country whereof thou askest, but outrageous men and froward hold it. And these thy gifts, thy countless gifts, thou didst bestow in vain. For if thou hadst found that man yet living in the land of Ithaca he would have sent thee on thy way with good return of thy presents, and with all hospitality, as is due to the man that begins the kindness. But come, declare me this and plainly tell me all; how many years are passed since thou didst entertain him, thy guest ill-fated and my child,—if ever such an one there was,—hapless man, whom, far from his friends and his country's soil, the fishes, it may be, have devoured in the deep sea, or on the shore he has fallen the prey of birds and beasts. His mother wept not over him nor clad him for burial, nor his father, we that begat him. Nor did his bride, whom men sought with rich gifts, the constant Penelope, bewail her lord upon the bier, as was meet, nor closed

his eyes, as is the due of the departed. Moreover, tell me this truly, that I may surely know, who art thou and whence of the sons of men? Where is thy city and where are they that begat thee? Where now is thy swift ship moored, that brought thee thither with thy godlike company? Hast thou come as a passenger on another's ship while they set thee ashore and went away?"

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying: "Yea now, I will tell thee all most plainly. From out of Alybas I come, where I dwell in a house renowned, and am the son of Apheidas the son of Polyemon, the prince, and my own name is Eperitus. But some god drave me wandering hither from Sicania against my will, and yonder my ship is moored toward the upland away from the city. But for Odysseus, this is now the fifth year since he went thence and departed out of my country. Ill-fated was he, and yet he had birds of good omen when he fared away, birds on the right; wherefore I sped him gladly on his road, and gladly he departed, and the heart of us twain hoped yet to meet in friendship on a day and to give splendid gifts."

So he spake, and on the old man fell a black cloud of sorrow. With both his hands he clutched the dust and ashes and showered them on his grey head, with ceaseless groaning. Then the heart of Odysseus was

moved, and up through his nostrils throbbed anon the keen sting of sorrow at the sight of his dear father. And he sprang toward him and fell on his neck and kissed him, saying:

"Behold, I here, even I, my father, am the man of whom thou askest; in the twentieth year am I come to mine own country. But stay thy weeping and tearful lamentation, for I will tell thee clearly, though great need there is of haste. I have slain the wooers in our halls and avenged their bitter scorn and evil deeds."

Then Laertes answered him and spake, saying: "If thou are indeed Odysseus, mine own child, that art come hither, show me now a manifest token, that I may be assured."

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying: "Look first on this scar and consider it, that the boar dealt me with his white tusk on Parnassus, whither I had gone, and thou didst send me forth, thou and my lady mother, to Autolycus my mother's father, to get the gifts which when he came hither he promised and convenanted to give me. But come, and I will even tell thee the trees through all the terraced garden, which thou gavest me once for mine own, and I was begging of thee this and that, being but a little child, and following thee through the garden. Through these very trees we were going, and thou didst tell me

the names of each of them. Pear trees thirteen thou gavest me and ten apple trees and figs two-score, and as we went, thou didst name the fifty rows of vines thou wouldest give me, whereof each one ripened at divers times, with all manner of clusters on their boughs, when the seasons of Zeus wrought mightily on them from on high."

So he spake, and straightway his knees were loosened, and his heart melted within him, as he knew the sure tokens that Odysseus showed him. About his dear son he cast his arms, and the steadfast goodly Odysseus caught him fainting to his breast. Now when he had got breath and his spirit came to him again, once more he answered and spake, saying:

"Father Zeus, verily ye gods yet bare sway on high Olympus, if indeed the wooers have paid for their infatuate pride! But now my heart is terribly afraid, lest straightway all the men of Ithaca come up against us here, and haste to send messengers everywhere to the cities of the Cephallenians."

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered him, saying: "Take courage, and let not thy heart be careful about these matters. But come, let us go to the house that lies near the garden, for thither I sent forward Telemachus and the neatherd and the swineherd to get ready the meal as speedily as may be."

After these words the twain set out to the goodly

halls. Now when they had come to the fair-lying house, they found Telemachus and the neatherd and the swineherd carving much flesh, and mixing the dark wine. Meanwhile the Sicilian handmaid bathed high-hearted Laertes in his house, and anointed him with olive-oil, and cast a fair mantle about him. Then Athene drew nigh, and made greater the limbs of the shepherd of the people, taller she made him than before and mightier to behold. Then he went forth from the bath, and his dear son marvelled at him, beholding him like to the deathless gods in presence. And uttering his voice he spake to him winged words:

"Father, surely one of the gods that are from everlasting hath made thee goodlier and greater to behold."

Then wise Laertes answered him, saying: "Ah, would to father Zeus and Athene and Apollo, that such as I was when I took Nericus, the stablished castle on the foreland of the continent, being then the prince of the Cephallenians, would that in such might, and with mail about my shoulders, I had stood to aid thee yesterday in our house, and to beat back the wooers; so should I have loosened the knees of many an one of them in the halls, and thou shouldest have been gladdened in thine inmost heart!"

So they spake each with the other. But when the others had ceased from their task and made ready the feast, they sat down all orderly on chairs and on

high seats. Then they began to put forth their hands on the meat, and the old man Dolius drew nigh, and the old man's sons withal came tired from their labour in the fields, for their mother, the aged Sicilian woman, had gone forth and called them, she that saw to their living and diligently cared for the old man, now that old age had laid hold on him. So soon as they looked on Odysseus and took knowledge of him, they stood still in the halls in great amazement. But Odysseus addressed them in gentle words, saying:

"Old man, sit down to meat and do ye forget your marvelling, for long have we been eager to put forth our hands on the food, as we abode in the hall alway expecting your coming."

So he spake, and Dolius ran straight toward him stretching forth both his hands, and he grasped the hand of Odysseus and kissed it on the wrist, and uttering his voice spake to him winged words:

"Beloved, forasmuch as thou hast come back to us who sore desired thee, and no longer thought to see thee, and the gods have led thee home again;—hail to thee and welcome manifold, and may the gods give thee all fortune! Moreover, tell me this truly, that I may be assured, whether wise Penelope yet knows well that thou hast come back hither, or whether we shall despatch a messenger."

Then Odysseus of many counsels answered, saying:

"Old man, already she knows all; what need to busy thyself herewith?"

Thereon the other sat him down again on his polished settle. And in like wise the sons of Dolius gathered about the renowned Odysseus, and greeted him well and clasped his hands, and then sat down all orderly by Dolius their father.

So they were busy with the meal in the halls. Now Rumour the messenger went swiftly all about the city, telling the tale of the dire death and fate of the wooers. And the people heard it all at once, and thronged together from every side with sighing and groaning, before the house of Odysseus. And each brought forth his dead from the halls, and buried them; but those that came out of other cities they placed on swift ships, and sent to fisher-folk to carry, each corpse to his own home. As for them they all fared together to the assembly place, in sorrow of heart. When they were all gathered and come together, Eupeithes arose and spake among them, for a comfortless grief lay heavy on his heart for his son Antinoüs, the first man that goodly Odysseus had slain. Weeping for him he made harangue and spake among them:

"Friends, a great deed truly hath this man devised against the Achæans. Some with his ships he led away, many men and noble, and his hollow ships hath he lost, and utterly lost of his company and others again, and

those far the best of the Cephallenians he hath slain on his coming home. Up now, before ever he gets him swiftly either to Pylos or to fair Elis, where the Epeians bear sway, let us go forth; else even hereafter shall we have shame of face forever. For a scorn this is even for the ears of men unborn to hear if we avenge not ourselves on the slayers of our sons and of our brethren. Life would no more be sweet to me, but rather would I die straightway and be with the departed. Up, let us be going, lest these fellows be beforehand with us and get them over the sea."

Thus he spake weeping, and pity fell on all the Achæans. Then came near to them Medon and the divine minstrel, forth from the halls of Odysseus, for that sleep had let them go. They stood in the midst of the gathering, and amazement seized every man. Then Medon, wise of heart, spake among them, saying:

"Hearken to me now, ye men of Ithaca, for surely Odysseus planned not these deeds without the will of the gods. Nay, I myself beheld a god immortal, who stood hard by Odysseus, in the perfect semblance of Mentor; now as a deathless god was he manifest in front of Odysseus, cheering him, and yet again scaring the wooers he stormed through the hall, and they fell thick one on another."

Thus he spake, and pale fear gat hold of the limbs of all. Then the old man, the lord Halitherses, spake

among them, the son of Mastor, for he alone saw before and after. Out of his good will he made harangue and spake among them, saying:

"Hearken to me now, ye men of Ithaca, to the word that I will say. Through your own cowardice, my friends, have these deeds come to pass. For ye obeyed not me, nor Mentor, the shepherd of the people, to make your sons cease from their foolish ways. A great villainy they wrought in their evil infatuation, wasting the wealth and holding in no regard the wife of a prince, while they deemed that he would never more come home. And now let things be on this wise, and obey my counsel. Let us not go forth against him, lest haply some may find a bane of their own bringing."

So he spake, but they leapt up with a great cry, the more part of them, while the rest abode there together: for his counsel was not to the mind of the more part, but they gave ear to Eupeithes, and swiftly thereafter they rushed for their armour. So when they had arrayed them in shining mail, they assembled together in front of the spacious town. And Eupeithes led them in his witlessness, for he thought to avenge the slaying of his son, yet himself was never to return, but then and there to meet his doom.

Now Athene spake to Zeus, the son of Cronos, saying: "O Father, our father Cronides, throned in

the highest, answer and tell me what is now the hidden counsel of thy heart? Wilt thou yet further rouse up evil war and the terrible din of battle, or art thou minded to set them at one again in friendship?"

Then Zeus, the gatherer of the clouds, answered her, saying: "My child, why dost thou thus straitly question me, and ask me this? Nay, didst not thou thyself devise this very thought, namely, that Odysseus should indeed take vengeance on these men at his coming? Do as thou wilt, but I will tell thee of the better way. Now that goodly Odysseus hath wreaked vengeance on the wooers, let them make a firm covenant together with sacrifice, and let him be king all his days, and let us bring about oblivion of the slaying of their children and their brethren; so may both sides love one another as of old, and let peace and wealth abundant be their portion."

Therewith he roused Athene to yet greater eagerness, and from peaks of Olympus she came glancing down.

Now when they had put from them the desire of honey-sweet food, the steadfast goodly Odysseus began to speak among them, saying:

"Let one go forth and see, lest the people be already drawing near against us."

So he spake, and the son of Dolius went forth at his bidding, and stood on the outer threshold and saw them

all close at hand. Then straightway he spake to Odysseus winged words:

"Here they be, close upon us! Quick, let us to arms!"

Thereon they rose up and arrayed them in their harness, Odysseus and his men being four, and the six sons of Dolius, and likewise Laertes and Dolius did on their armour, grey-headed as they were, warriors through stress of need. Now when they had clad them in shining mail, they opened the gates and went forth, and Odysseus led them.

Then Athene, daughter of Zeus, drew near them in the likeness of Mentor, in fashion and in voice. And the steadfast goodly Odysseus beheld her and was glad, and straightway he spake to Telemachus his dear son:

"Telemachus, soon shalt thou learn this, when thou thyself art got to the place of the battle where the best men try the issue—namely, not to bring shame on thy father's house, on us who in time past have been eminent for might and hardihood over all the world."

Then wise Telemachus answered him, saying: "Thou shalt see me, if thou wilt, dear father, in this my mood no whit disgracing thy line, according to thy word."

So spake he, and Laertes was glad and spake, saying: "What a day has dawned for me, kind gods; yea, a glad man am I! My son and my son's son are vying with one another in valour."

Then grey-eyed Athene stood beside Laertes, and spake to him: "O son of Arceisius that art far the dearest of all my friends, pray first to the grey-eyed maid and to father Zeus, then swing thy long spear aloft and hurl it straightway."

Therewith Pallas Athene breathed into him great strength. Then he prayed to the daughter of mighty Zeus, and straightway swung his long spear aloft and hurled it, and smote Eupeithes through his casque with the cheek-piece of bronze. The armour kept not out the spear that went clean through, and he fell with a crash, and his arms rattled about his body. Then Odysseus and his renowned son fell on the fore-fighters, and smote them with swords and two-headed spears. And now would they have slain them all and cut off their return, had not Athene called aloud, the daughter of Zeus, lord of the ægis, and stayed all the host of the enemy, saying:

"Hold your hands from fierce fighting, ye men of Ithaca, that so ye may be parted quickly, without bloodshed."

So spake Athene, and pale fear gat hold of them all. The arms flew from their hands in their terror and fell all upon the ground, as the goddess uttered her voice. To the city they turned their steps, as men fain of life, and the steadfast goodly Odysseus with a terrible cry gathered himself together and hurled in on

them, like an eagle of lofty flight. Then in that hour the son of Cronos cast forth a flaming bolt, and it fell at the feet of the grey-eyed goddess, the daughter of the mighty Sire. Then grey-eyed Athene spake to Odysseus, saying:

"Son of Laertes, of the seed of Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, refrain thee now and stay the strife of even-handed war, lest perchance the son of Cronos be angry with thee, even Zeus of the far-borne voice."

So spake Athene, and he obeyed and was glad at heart. And thereafter Pallas Athene set a covenant between them with sacrifice, she, the daughter of Zeus, lord of the ægis, in the likeness of Mentor, both in fashion and in voice.

PRONUNCIATION OF PROPER NAMES

Vowels.—Each vowel is usually pronounced separately, but *æ, ai, au, ei, eus, œ,* have the following sounds when they are diphthongs: *æ* and *œ* are pronounced as *ē* in *Cæsar; ai* and *ei,* as *i* in *island; au,* as *ow* in *now; eu,* as *u* in *use.* When accented, *y* is pronounced as *i* in *island;* when unaccented, as *i* in *till.*

Consonants.—*Ch* is pronounced as *k. C* and *g* are soft (as *s* and *j*) before *e, i, y, æ, œ, eu;* otherwise, as *k* and *g* in *gas.*

Accents.—Words of two syllables are accented on the first syllable. Words of three or more syllables are accented in the antepenult, that is, the third syllable from the end; unless the penult, or syllable next to the end, is "long." A penult is long when it contains (1) a vowel followed by two consonants; (2) a diphthong *(æ, ai, œ).* In the following list the accent is indicated for all proper names as to which the English reader would be in doubt after reading carefully the foregoing explanation.

A-chæ′-ans.
Æ-æ′-an.
Ae-e′-tes.
Æ′-o-lus.
A-ge-la′-us.
Am-phi-tri′-te.
An-dræ′-mon.
An-ti-cli′-a.
Aph-ro-di′-te.
A-re′-te.
A-re-thu′-sa.
Ar′-gives.
Ar-næ′-us.
A-the′-ne.
Au-ton′-o-ë.

Ceph-al-le′-ni.
Cy-clo′-pes.
Cy-the′-ra.

De-iph′-o-bus.
Do-do′-na.

Ech-e-ne′-us.
Ei-do′-the-a.
El-pe′-nor.
Ep-e′-ans.
Ep-ei′-us.
Et-e-o′-ne-us.
Eu-e′-nor.
Eu-mæ′-us.
Eu-pei′-thes.
Eu-ry-klei′a.

He-phæs′-tus.
He-ra.

Hip-po-da-mei'-a.
Hy-pe'-ri-on.

Lac-e-dæ'-mon.
La-er'-tes.

Ma-le'-a.
Men-e-la'-us.

Nau-sic'-a-ä.
No-ë'-mon.

O-ce'-a-nus.

Pei-se'-nor.
Pe-nel'-o-pe.
Per-i-me'-des.

Per-seph'-o-ne.
Phil-oc-te'-tes.
Po-li'-tes.
Pol-y-phe'-mus.
Po-sei'-don.

Te-lem'-a-chus.
Ti-tho'-nus.

The reader will perhaps also be helped by the following list of the Greek and Latin names of gods and goddesses who play important parts in the narrative. When the Greek names are new to him, the corresponding Latin names may be more familiar.

Greek	*Latin*
Zeus.	Jupiter.
Hera.	Juno.
(Pallas) Athene.	Minerva.
Aphrodite.	Venus.
Poseidon.	Neptune.
Ares.	Mars.
Hephæstus.	Vulcan.

Troy - Trojan war
Ismarus - Cicones - Lost 6 men fro
ach ship
. Land of Lotus Eaters - Had to drag
men away by force.
. Land of Cyclopes: Polyphemus -
The blinding of him.
. Aeolia: King of the winds
. Lastragons: Giant cannibals
. Aea: Circe turns Odysseus men
swine.
. Hades: talks to blind soothsay
Tiresias
. Aea: Circe tells of future dange
. Sirens:
1. Scylla + Charybdis:
2. Helios
Ogygea
P.